



The Case of the

DEMONIACS

Mentioned in the

NEW TESTAMENT.



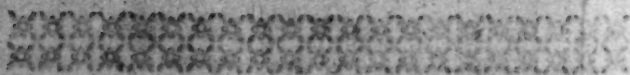


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3

The CASE of the
D E M O N I A C S

Mentioned in the
NEW TESTAMENT:
FOUR
DISCOURSES

Upon MARK V. 19.

WITH
AN APPENDIX

For farther illustrating the SUBJECT.

By NATHANIEL LARDNER, D. D.

L O N D O N :

Printed for C. HENDERSON under the *Royal-Exchange*.

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DEMONIACS

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Upon MARK V. 10.

WITH

A N A P H O R I S M

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[P. 2. 2. 2. 2.]



P R E F A C E.

THESE Discourses were preached to a small, but attentive Audience, in 1742. In the Year 1737, were published by a learned Author *An Enquiry, and a further Enquiry into the Meaning of Demoniacs in the New Testament.* But as the Subject had much employed my Thoughts, and the Plan had been drawn up a good while before, I did not discern any sufficient Reason for laying it aside.

The Publication of these Discourses has been often desired by divers of those who heard them, and by others.

They

P R E F A C E.

They who know how I have been engaged, need not to be told the Reason of the Delay. They might have been put into one continued Dissertation. But then the practical Observations must have been struck out. Which I was unwilling to have done. And in their present Form they may remain, for a while at least, a Monument, that any Subject, tending to illustrate the Scriptures, may be treated in Christian Assemblies, if it be done with Modestie and Discretion.

These Discourses, with the Appendix, may be reckoned a Supplement to the first Part of the Credibility of the Gospel Historie.

March 15. 1758.

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P. 19. l. 7. from the bottom, r. distraction.

Page 41. line 10. read Mark.

P. 69. l. 13. r. and other.

P. 73. l. 9. from the bottom, r. opinion.

P. 92. l. 8. r. course.

In the Notes.

P. 45. for *Socrates* r. *Plato*.

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DISCOURSE I.

The Case of the DEMONIACS,
mentioned in the New Testament.

MARK V. 19.

*Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith
unto him: Go home to thy friends, and tell
them, how great things the Lord has done
for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.*



T is now some years, since I Disc.
explained, and employed, as I I.
was able, the historie of our
Lord's miracles, recorded in the
Gospels. I think, that very few were en-
tirely omitted, which are particularly re-
lated, except this in the countrey of the
Gadarens. And I always intended to con-
sider this likewise, though it has been long
B deferred.

DISC. deferred. As life, through the divine
 I. goodnesse, is still preserved ; I propose now
 to consider this historie, which, with some
 few differences only, is found in three
 several Evangelists *.

I. In the first place I shall consider distinctly this whole narration, comparing together the several Evangelists, as we go along.

II. After which I intend to make some remarks upon this miracle, and the historie of it.

I. In the first place I shall distinctly consider the whole of this narration, comparing the several Evangelists, as we go along.

The time of this miracle may be in some measure perceived by the connexion. In all the three Evangelists it is preceded by an account of our Lord's crossing the sea of *Galilee*, with his disciples, and laying a tempest, which they had met with in their passage.

* Matt. viii. 28.—34.
 viii. 26—39.

Mark v. 1.—20.

Luke

St.

St. Luke had before given an account of Divers
 divers of our Lord's discourses: *Then came I.*
 unto him his mother and his brethren, and *Luke viii.*
 could not come at him for the press.—Now it 19
 came to pass on a certain day, that he went into 22.
 a ship with the disciples. And he said unto 36.
 them: Let us go unto the other side of the
 lake.—And they arrived at the country of
 the Gadarens, which is over-against Galilee.

St. Mark also, having related divers of
 our Lord's discourses, says: *And the same*
day, when even was come, he saith unto them:
Let us pass over unto the other side. And
when they had sent away the multitude, they
took him even as he was in the ship. And
there were also with him other little ships.
And there arose a great storm of wind, and
the waves beat into the ship, so that it was
now full. And he was in the hinder part of
the ship asleep on a pillow; and they awake
him,—And he arose, and rebuked the wind.
And the wind ceased, and there was a great
calm.—And they feared exceedingly, and said
one to another: What manner of man is this,
that even the winds and the sea obey him!
And they came over unto the other side of
the sea, into the country of the Gadarens.
 That is, our Lord passed from the western

DISC. to the eastern side of the sea of *Galilee*, or
 I. of *Tiberias*, as it is called at other times.

St. Matthew calls the place, where our Lord arrived, *the countrey of the Gergesens*: whereas the two other Evangelists, as we have just seen, call it *the countrey of the Gadarens*. Some learned men think, that this last is the right reading in *St. Matthew's Gospel* also.

It follows in *St. Mark*, whose historie we shall for the most part take for our text, and cite in the first place: *And when he was come out of the ship, immediatly there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit*. From which words, I think, it may be concluded, that this man's abode, and the burial-place, where he chiefly was, lay near the shore, or upon the sea-side. *St. Luke's* words confirm this supposition, which are these: *And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time*.

But here is a difference between *St. Matthew* and the two other Evangelists. *St. Mark* says, *Immediatly there met him a man with an unclean spirit*. *St. Luke*: *A certain man, which had devils*. But *St. Matthew* says: *There met him two possessed with*

with devils, coming out of the tombs. Of Disc. this difficulty several solutions have been offered by learned interpreters of Scripture. I.

The most likely seems to be this : that one of these men was upon divers accounts more remarkable than the other : he, especially, may have been *exceeding fierce*, and his distemper of the longest standing. Perhaps, he was best known in those parts, being an inhabitant of the city, not far off. He likewise was the person, with whom our Lord discoursed chiefly, asking him his name, and receiving for answer, that he was called *Legion*. It is likely, that one only desired to accompany the Lord Jesus, when cured. And possibly he only of the two had a grateful sense of the benefit conferred, and afterwards declared, *how great things the Lord had done for him*. There being therefore several things peculiar to one, two of the Evangelists speak of him only, omitting the other, for the sake of brevity. But there is no contradiction between them and the third Evangelist. There were two, as St. *Matthew* says. Which is not denied by St. *Mark*, or St. *Luke*, though they confine their relation to one only.

DISC. Says St. Mark : *Immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs.* St. Luke : *Neither abode in any house, but in the tombs.* St. Matthew : *There met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs.*

This circumstance therefore is mentioned by all the three Evangelists : that this man, or these two men, had their abode in tombs, or among tombs. It was not then usual to bury within the walls of cities, but at some distance without them, more or less. By *tombs* may be meant in general a burying-place, where were many sepulchres : or by tombs may be meant *sepulchres*. And indeed many of the sepulchres of the eastern countreys at that time were large, capable of containing divers persons. And to this day, travellers, when overtaken by storms and bad weather, take shelter in them.

These men then being fierce and melancholic, shunning companie, and being shunned, abode at a distance from all cities, and particularly *among or in sepulchres*. This place suited their gloomie apprehensions, and here in the night-season, and in bad weather, they had shelter. Moreover, there might be another reason of this.


this. For some are of opinion, that the Disc. demons, or unclean spirits, by which these I. persons were possessed, were not supposed to be fallen angels, but the souls, or departed spirits, of bad men. If so, a lunatic, acted by such spirits, or thinking himself to be acted by them, might be much disposed to be chiefly among the dead, or in buryal-places. But whether there be any ground for that opinion, or not; it is likely, the two reasons beforementioned ought not to be disregarded: These places suited their melancholic apprehensions, and here at some seasons they had shelter and relief from rain and cold.

There follows in the Evangelists a description of the unhappy circumstances of one or both these persons. Says St. Mark, who is most particular: *And no man could bind him, no not with chains; because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces. And always night and day he was on the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.* St. Luke's account is, *There met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and wore no cloths, neither abode in any house, but in*

DISC. *the tombs.* And afterwards : For oftentimes it had caught him. And he was kept bound with chains, and in fetters. And he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness, or the desert mountainous countrey, where the tombs were situated. St. Matthew more briefly says : There met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass that way.

The sum is, that this was a deplorable case. One of these men, especially, had been in this condition, of a discomposed mind, for a long season. He was exceeding fierce, and dangerous at some times. He had been fast bound, but he had broken his bands, escaped out of his confinement, and had been for some while in desert, mountainous places, lodging in sepulchres only, not in any house. All which are evident symptoms of lunacie or distraction. That is the unhappie case before us.

Possibly it may be here inquired by some : How came the Evangelists, especially Mark and Luke, who are most particular, to be so well acquainted with the historie of this man's case in time past : to be able to say, *he had been so long time*, and that he had been

been often bound with chains, and that they Disc.
had been broken asunder by him? His present I.
circumstances and actions, his nakedness, 
his fierceness, his cutting himself with
flints, his crying, or raving, as he did,
were discerned immediatly. These things
the disciples were eye or ear-witnesses of,
upon the man's approaching them, when
they came out of the ship. But how came
they to know the circumstances of his in-
disposition in time past, and the treatment
that had been given him?

To which I answer, that it is easie to
suppose divers things, which are not men-
tioned in relations of this kind. Which
therefore are omitted, because all intelligent
and attentive persons are able to supply
them. It is not unlikely, that the man
himself, when cured by our Lord, gave
some account of his former condition.
Moreover here were the keepers of the
swine, who might be able to relate several
things concerning him. Possibly too it was
a well known case, and the people who
came over with Jesus from the other side
of the lake might be able to give the dis-
ciples some information concerning him.

Finally,

Disc. Finally, before our Lord went away,

I: great multitudes of that countrey had come to the place, where Jesus was. And it is reasonable for us to conclude, that some of those persons were able and disposed to give an account of both these men, especially of one of them: which indeed, as before hinted, I take to be a main reason, why the Evangelists, *Mark* and *Luke*, confined their historie to one, though there were two of these men, as said by *St. Matthew*: even because they had received more particular intelligence concerning one, than the other.

It follows in *St. Mark*: But when he saw Jesus, afar off, he ran and worshiped him. And cryed with a loud voice, and said: What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God. I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not. (For he had said unto him: Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit.) And he asked him: What is thy name? And he answered, saying: My name is legion, for we are many. And he besought him much, that he would not send them away out of the countrey. *St. Luke* likewise says: When he saw Jesus, he cryed out, and fell down before him, and with a
loud

loud voice said, *What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God most high. I beseech thee torment me not.* (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man). And Jesus asked him, saying: *What is thy name?* And he said: *Legion, because many devils were entred into him.* And they besought him, that he would not command them to go out into the deep. St. Matthew, though briefer than the others, says: *And behold, they cryed out, saying: What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God! Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?*

By all the Evangelists we are assured, that one, or both these men, either they, or the evil spirits in them, owned our Lord's character, as the Messiah, or the Son of God. And they entreat him, not to send them away. But I think it appears, both from St. *Mark*, and St. *Luke*, that these things are not said by them, until our Lord had signified his will, that the man, or men, should be delivered from this unhappy circumstance. Then they own the character of Jesus, that he was the Christ, and his power, as such, to command, and send them, whither he pleased.

DISC. pleased. But they entreat him, not to
 I. punish them for having taken possession of
 these persons, and made them miserable. Yea, they are represented complaining of his command as unreasonable : *What have we to do with thee ?* Why should you concern yourself with us ? Leave us to act as we think fit, until the last day, the time of the full punishment allotted to us.

The unclean spirits speaking in this manner, Jesus asked one of the men, what was his name, and he answered *Legion*, because there were in him many unclean spirits.

As these spirits desired, that they might not be *tormented before the time* ; so in particular, they petitioned our Lord, that he would *not send them away out of the countrey*, as it is expressed in *St. Mark* : or, that he would *not command them to go out into the deep*, as in *St. Luke*.

Evil spirits delight in mischief, and are afraid of punishment. They therefore make it their request to Jesus, if he would be obeyed with regard to the command he had given them, to *come out of the men*, whom they had so long tormented, that yet he would not require them quite to
 leave

leave that countrey, but permit them to Disc.
act as they pleased toward some other per- I.
sons in those parts. At least they entreat }
him, however, that he would not order
them away into *the deep*, or *the abyſſe*, that
is, the place of torment.

As the full punishment * of fallen
angels, as well as of bad men, was defer-
red to the great day of the general judge-
ment; it was the opinion of many at that
time, that some of those evil angels and
spirits were allowed, (though subject to
controlle,) to visit the region of our air,
and this earth, and to inflict diseases, and
other calamities upon men. Of this num-
ber are these unclean spirits. And they
earnestly entreat, not to be sent back to
their prison, and confined in the abyſſe, or
place of torment, as yet.

I proceed to what remains, now first
reading St. Matthew: *And there was a good
way off from them an herd of many swine
feeding. So the devils besought him, saying:
if thou cast us out, suffer us to go into the
herd of swine. And he said unto them: Go.
And when they were come out, they went into
the herd of swine. And behold, the whole herd*

* See 2 Pet. ii. 4. and Jude ver. 6.

Disc. of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters. And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. And when they saw him, they besought him, that he would depart out of their coasts. And he entred into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

Here I would observe, that this great work of our Lord was performed with deliberation. There was some time between his intimation, that these evil spirits should remove, and their actual departure. Or, in other words, the men were not healed at once, immediatly upon his commanding the evil spirits to come out of the men. But he allowed a petition to be presented to him, which was in part granted.

St. Mark's account is after this manner : Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding. And all the devils besought him, saying : Send us into the swine, that we may enter into the swine. And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine. And the herd ran violently

violently down a steep place into the sea (they were about two thousand :) and were choaked in the sea. And they that fed the swine fled, and told it in the city, and in the countrey. And they went out to see, what it was that was done. And they came to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind. And they were afraid. And they that saw it, told them, how it befell to him that was possessed of the devil, and also concerning the swine. And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.

DISC.
I.

St. Luke's relation is to the like purpose : And there was there an herd of many swine feeding on the mountain. And they besought him, that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. Then went the devils out of the men, and entred into the swine. And the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choaked. When they that fed them saw what was done, they fled, and went and told it in the city, and in the countrey. Then they went out to see what was done, and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind : And they were afraid.

DISC. *afraid. They also which saw it, told them by*

I. *what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed. Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarens round about besought him to depart from them, for they were taken with great fear. And he went up into the ship, and returned back again.*

As this country was a part of the land of Israel, and the Jews were forbidden by the law of Moses to eat swine's flesh; it may seem strange to some, that there should have been in this place so large a number of those animals. But there is reason to think, that this country was then chiefly inhabited by Gentils, though there were Jews likewise. And it may be supposed, that the herd belonged to the Gentil inhabitants. However, possibly some Jews might have a property in them, and might trade in those creatures, selling them to Heathens, without partaking of them, as food.

The Evangelists do all agree in this part of the historic. But two inquiries may be here put. 1. By what means was this herd of swine hurried down the precipice, and drowned in the waters? 2. For what reasons did our Lord suffer this to be done?

First,

First, How, or by what means was this Disc.
 herd hurried down the precipice, and I.
 drowned in the waters? And there are
 several ways of accounting for this. They
 who suppose that there was here only a
 distemper, and are unwilling to admit the
 agence of any bad spirits in this case, say,
 these men, or one of them, might, with
 the permission of Jesus, go and drive the
 swine off the precipice into the sea, where
 they were drowned. Or else, our Lord
 was pleased to transfer the lunacie, or dis-
 traction, from this man, or these men, to
 the swine. And the distemper having
 seized them, they took their way down a
 steep road, and perished in the sea.

Others, who readily admit the agence
 of evil spirits, in this affair, say, that with
 our Lord's permission, when these spirits
 were removed out of the men, they took
 possession of the swine, and hurried them
 into the waters, where they were drowned.

Every one is at liberty to judge for him-
 self. But I readily own, that I do not ap-
 prove of that solution, which supposeth,
 that the lunacie was transferred from the
 men to the swine. For this implyes, that
 the drowning of the swine was owing to

DISC. our Lord's agence, or interposition: where-
 I. as I do not perceive, that our Lord wrought
 any miracles that were hurtful. The only
 instance of this kind, which I recollect, is
 the withering a barren useless fig-tree in
 the way between *Bethanie* and *Jerusalem*.
 As then there is no clear evidence of our
 Lord's interposing in this matter, I presume
 it ought not to be admitted.

Secondly, it is inquired: Why, or for
 what reasons did our Lord suffer this to be
 done? by the men themselves, before they
 were quite cured, or by the evil spirits,
 when they were departed from the men?
 For according to the accounts given by the
 Evangelists, it was not, and could not be
 done without his permission. His leave
 was asked, and granted.

Some think, that our Lord permitted
 this to be done, as a proof of the real
 agence of evil spirits, in this case.

But whether that was a reason, or not,
 there are, I think, other uses, which this
 event would answer, and therefore prob-
 ably were intended herein. For the losse
 of the swine tended to make the cure of
 the man public. It had this effect. *They*
that fed the swine fled, and told it in the
city,

city, and in the countrey; that is, they Disc.
 hastened to noife it abroad every where. And I.
 many were brought to Jesus, and came to
 see the man, who was healed, and stayed
 with him, sitting at his feet. Hereby
 therefore, and by means of the immediate
 publication of the miracle, the people of
 the neighboring town and countrey were (b)
 proved. Jesus by his presence with them,
 and by the great miracle performed among
 them, with which they were presently ac-
 quainted, made them a tender of divine
 knowledge, and other spiritual blessings.
 But though a great and evident miracle had
 been wrought among them, one of the
 most desirable works that can be thought
 of, delivering a man from distraction, re-
 storing him to the use of reason and un-
 derstanding; these people were so carnal,
 and so apprehensive of suffering in their
 worldly interests, that instead of entreating
 Jesus to stay with them, a while at least,
 that they might partake in some other like

(b) Non quod concesserit Salvator daemonibus quod petebant, dixit, *Ite*: Sed ut per interfectionem porcorum hominibus salutis occasio præberetur. Pastores enim ista cernentes, statim nunciant civitati. *Hieron in Matt. Tom. 4. p. 29. m.*

DISC. benefits of his great power, and be instructed by him in things of religion, that
 I. they joyned together with much unanimity in beseeching him, to depart out of their coasts. Which he did, and went back again to the other side of the lake.

There remains yet one article in this historie, omitted indeed by St. Matthew, but related by both the other Evangelists. Says St. Mark : *And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil, prayed him, that he might be with him : Howbeit, Jesus suffered him not. But saith unto him : Go home to thy friends, and tell them, how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis, how great things Jesus had done for him, and all men did marvel.* St. Luke's words are these : *Now the man, out of whom the devils were departed, besought him, that he might be with him. But Jesus sent him away, saying : Return to thy own house, and shew, how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city, how great things Jesus had done unto him.*

It is likely, that this person requested to Disc. be with Jesus, for his own security, fear- I. ing, that those evil spirits would again take possession of him, and torment him. But Jesus suffered him not to be with him. For our Lord to have allowed the man to accompany him in his journeys would have looked like ostentation, and might have been esteemed vain-glorious. Besides, the power of Jesus was more conspicuous in the man's safety at a distance. And it was fit likewise, that this person should now encrease in faith, and live without fear, trusting in God every where, and at all times.

His request not being granted, *he went his way, and published throughout the whole city, how great things Jesus had done unto him.* He was an honest and grateful man. And in the place where he dwelled, and every where, and to all men, as he had opportunity, he declared the great work, which Jesus had done for him.

Perhaps, some may here inquire : How shall we reconcile the direction given by Christ upon this occasion with what we find elsewhere ? Sometimes he commanded silence, and charged men not to speak

DISC. of the miracles he had wrought. Here

I. he directs this man to tell others what *God had done for him*. To which I answer : Our Lord never desired, that any miracles wrought by him should be denied, or disowned by any. Nor did he intend, that men, on whom they were performed, should conceal them from their friends and relatives, or their own familie : though he did forbid a general and open publication of some of his mighty works. And what he says to this man is no more than this : *Return to thy own house : or, go home to thy friends : and tell them, how great things the Lord has done for thee, and has had compassion on thee.*

II. Having gone over this historie, I would now add some remarks and observations.

1. We hence perceive, that *St. Mark's Gospel* is not an abridgement of *St. Matthew's*, as some have thought. *St. Mark* entirely omits divers things recorded by *St. Matthew*. And he has some histories quite wanting in that other Evangelist. This historie, which we have now considered, affords a good argument against that opinion. *St. Matthew* speaks of two
in

in this countrey of the *Gergesens* possessed with devils. St. *Mark* mentions one only. If he had seen St. *Matthew's* Gospel, he would not have so written this historie, without assigning some reason for the difference, or inserting a hint for reconciling it. St. *Mark* says, *the number of the swine was about two thousand*, which is not mentioned by either of the other Evangelists. St. *Mark* is, besides, in several parts of his relation of this miracle more full and copious than St. *Matthew*, who has nothing of the discourse, which our Lord held with the man called *Legion*, and also entirely omits the man's request, when cured, to be with Jesus, and our Lord's refusal, and the publication, which the man afterwards made every where of the great cure, which had been wrought upon him.

In a word, the first three Evangelists are all distinct and independent witnesses of our Lord's life and miracles. They did not write by concert. Nor had any one of them, when he wrote, seen either of the other two Gospels. The case however is somewhat different with regard to St. *John*. He perused the other three

DISC. Gospels, before he wrote. And he has

I. both confirmed their historie, and made additions of his own.

2. The distemper, with which these men were afflicted, was lunacie or distraction. I say, the distemper of this man, or these two men, (whatever influence evil spirits might have,) was lunacie or distraction. This is evident from particulars mentioned by all the Evangelists. St. *Matthew* says, that the two men which met Jesus upon his coming on shore, were *exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass that way.* The particulars related by the other Evangelists concerning one of those men are indications of the same thing: his having been bound, and fettered, and his breaking his bands, living in the tombs, without clothing, cutting himself with flints: as also the whimsical answer, which he made, when our Lord asked, what was his name. And the cure is represented by his recovering his reason and understanding, and a composed temper and behaviour. For it is observed, that when the people came out of the city, they saw him *sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind.*

3. This

3. This is the only miracle of this kind, Disc. which is particularly recorded in the I. Gospels. There might be many other. But I do not recollect any other, particularly related by the Evangelists. There are divers instances of persons, who had *evil spirits*, and were *lunatic*. But their distemper was not the same with that of these men. The young man brought to the disciples, when our Lord was in the mount, was *lunatic*, and *fore vexed*. But Matth. xvii. 15. his distemper was the epilepsie, or falling sicknesse. *Oft times*, it is said, *he falletb into the fire, and often into the waters*. And other symptoms of that distemper are to be found in the historie of his case.

Of *Marie Magdalen* it is said, that *out of* Matth. xvi. 9. *her went seven devils*: And I am not un- Luke viii. 1, 2. willing to allow her case to have been much the same with that of the two men at the tombs: though it is not quite certain. But her cure, or the miracle wrought upon her, is no where particularly related. All that is said of her case is no more than this: *And the twelve were with him, and certain women, which had been* Luke viii. 1, 2. *bealed of evil spirits and infirmities*: *Marie Magdalen,*

DISC. *Magdalen, out of whom went seven devils,*

I. *Joanna, and many others.*

4. The miracle, which we have now considered, was the effect of our Lord's benevolence. It does not appear, that he had any invitation to come into the country of the *Gadarens*. But he went thither of his own accord, with a view of healing the two men at the tombs: knowing their sad case from some occasional informations that had been given him, or by the perfect comprehensive knowledge, which he had of things remote, as well as near at hand.

The context, which was read before, assures us, that compassion and benevolence, without any particular invitation, brought our Lord hither. His words therefore are extremely proper, when he says to the man: *Go home to thy friends, and tell them, how great things the Lord has done for thee, and has had compassion on thee.* Unasked, unsought by friends, or any one else, he crossed the sea, and came on shore, conversed with these unhappy persons, relieved them in their deplorable and disconsolate condition, and then went back again to the other side.

How

How conspicuous is the benevolence ! **Disc.**
 how great and amiable is the benignity of **I.**
 the Lord Jesus ! He is entitled to the
 esteem and love of all. He came to seek
 and to save those who were lost. And by
 mighty works of goodnesse on the bodies
 of men, or for rectifying and putting in
 order the human frame, as constituted of
 soul and body, he demonstrated the truth
 of his propheticall character and mission,
 and invited men to embrace and obey that
 doctrine, which directs them in the way
 to the possession of eternal life.

That word ye know, says St. Peter at the **Acts x. 37.**
house of Cornelius, how God anointed Jesus
of Nazareth, with the holy Ghost, and with
power : who went about doing good. They
who were afflicted, as these men were,
could not be easily brought to Jesus. And
it is likely, that few had faith enough to
ask such a cure of him, especially at a di-
stance. Our Lord therefore, as when
Lazarus was dead, now also of his own
good-will left the place where he was, took
shipping, and went over the sea of Galilee,
for the sake of these men in the countrey
of the Gadarens, whose case was extreme-
ly deplorable, and above all human relief.

Disc. 5. I would observe, that this miracle

I. was very public, at least, well known.

Our Lord went to this place attended by his disciples. As he came out of the ship, the *two men met him*. Some of the mariners therefore, belonging to that ship, in all probability, were present at the miracle. For the appearance of such miserable Objects could not but excite their curiosity. It is probable, that divers others were spectators of this great cure. St. Mark proceeding to this matter says: *And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them: Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him, as he was, in the ship. And there were also with him several other little ships.* All these, it is likely, followed Jesus, and came on shore with him on the other side. Moreover, as before observed, our Lord performed this miracle deliberately. He discoursed with one of the men, who by the answer he made, as well as by his outward form, manifested the great disorder of his mind. And this part of that country must have been extremely desolate and unpeopled, if some passing by, and others, did not in this space of time

Mark iv.
35. 37.

time joyn our Lord's companie. There DISC.
 is therefore reason to conclude, that a good I.
 number of persons were gathered together
 from the ships, and from elsewhere, and
 were spectators of this great work. So
 much is intimated in those words of St.
Mark: And they that saw it told them, how
it had befallen him that was possessed of the
devil.

Then indeed it was very public. For
 upon the cure, and the losse of the swine,
 they who fed them went into the neigh-
 boring city. And the people came out to
 Jesus, and beheld the man calm and com-
 posed. And as St. *Mark* says, in the
 words just cited, *they who saw it*, then re-
 lated to them particularly, how the thing
 had been done. And as the case of one
 of these men was well known, he having
 been often bound ineffectually, and a long
 time afflicted with this disorder, and hav-
 ing been often terrible to such as passed
 that way: many, who afterwards saw him
 enjoying a composed mind, and the right
 exercise of reason, must have been fully
 apprised of his miraculous cure, if they
 were attentive.

As

DISC. As our Lord performed this miracle with
 I. deliberation, so I think he stayed in the
 same place some time afterwards : by which
 means many had an opportunity of seeing
 him with the man at his feet. We do not
 know exactly, how long our Saviour was
 here. But we may form a conjecture. It
 was even, when he took shipping. In the
 passage there was a storm. It is very like-
 ly, he did not arrive at the other side un-
 til morning. And probably, he stayed
 there the greatest part of that day, before
 he embarked again.

6. We learn by this historie to trust in
 divine providence, and not to live in fear
 of evil spirits, and their influence, or any
 accident whatever. They are under strict
 confinement. Or, if they are permitted at
 all to visit our region and orb, they are
 under restraint and controlle. They shall
 not be allowed to inflict on us any evil, nor
 shall any accident whatever befall us, but
 what shall be overruled, and sanctified for
 our benefit, if we choose the thing that is
 good, and cast our care upon God.

7. We learn the reasonableness of gra-
 titude for benefits bestowed upon us,
 especially if we receive any signal delive-
 rance

rance from great and uncommon afflictions. **Disc.**

Our blessed Lord did not choose, that this person should attend him. However, he

I.

bid him go home, and tell his friends there, how great things God had done for him, and had compassion on him. Though our Lord was meek and humble, and was far from seeking honour from men; he could not but be pleased with a thankful mind, sensible of benefits. Once, as he was traveling, and preaching the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven, *he met ten lepers, and they lifted up their voices, and said: Jesus, master, have mercie upon us.* He had mercie upon them, and bid them go and shew themselves to the priest. *As they went, they were cleansed.* And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God; and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks. *And he was a Samaritan.* And Jesus answering said: *Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glorie to God, save this stranger.* And he said unto him: *Arise, go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole.*

Luke xvii.

8. Finally,

DISC.

I.

8. Finally, from this historie we may learn, to bear meekly rebukes and discouragements in the prosecution of good designs. Jesus came into this countrey with a good intention. He here wrought a miracle, a work of the greatest kindnesse, restoring a man, who had been long under the forest of afflictions, whose cure was beyond all human skill, to the full use of reason and understanding. Nor was the neighborhood altogether unconcerned in this benefit. The man, who before was disagreeable, and terrible, was composed, and might be useful among them. But because this happy event was attended with temporal losse to some of them, they entreat the compassionate author of that great benefit, in whom was so much wisdom, and so much goodnesse, and so much power, *to depart out of their coasts.* And he acquiesced, not choosng to obtrude himself upon them, as the Evangelists inform us: *And he went up into the ship, and returned back again.* However it is added: *And it came to pass, that when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received him, for they were all waiting for him.* These things are written for the direction and support of wise and good men.

DIS-

DISCOURSE II.

MARK V. 19.

Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him : Go home to thy friends, and tell them, how great things the Lord has done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

HAVING formerly explained and Disc. II.
 improved the historie of most
 of our Lord's miracles, and lately
 that of the cure of the two men at the
 tombs in the countrey of the *Gadarens* ; I
 have thought it not improper to consider in
 general the case of those, who in the New
 Testament are spoken of as having *evil*, or
unclean spirits.

The subject is not immediatly practical.
 And it is most agreeable to insist upon the
 general principles of true religion, which
 are universally acknowledged, or are con-
 troverted by a few only, together with the
 virtues of a good life, which are of the
D greatest

Disc. greatest importance, and of absolute necessity, without which no man shall see the Lord, and those helps and means, which in their own nature, or by divine appointment, are fitted to promote faith in God, good works, and an heavenly frame of mind. These are the most excellent, the most delightful subjects of meditation and discourse. Upon no considerations, by no means whatever, would one be called off from these points, or cease to make them the usual topics of discourse in Christian assemblies.

Nevertheless, it may not be altogether unprofitable to treat on the subject I am now entering upon: it being what frequently occurs in the historie of our Saviour's miracles, as recorded in the Gospels. It is likely therefore, that by considering the several texts, wherein these unhappy cases and their cure are mentioned, some light may be cast upon the Holy Scriptures, and some parts of the evangelical historie may be better read with understanding.

In treating this subject I propose to observe the following method.

I. I

I. I would shew what are the opinions Disc.
of men of the present, and late times, II.
concerning this matter.

II. I would observe, what was the general opinion in the time of our Saviour, and his Apostles, and what notions men then formed of these cases.

III. I will endeavor to discover the truth, and what idea we ought to have of those unhappy persons, who are spoken of as *possessed of devils*.

IV. I intend to consider objections and difficulties, relating to that opinion; which may appear to be most probable.

I. In the first place I would shew, what are the opinions of men of the present, or late times, concerning this matter. For there are two different opinions; one general and common, the other less general, and somewhat uncommon.

The opinion, which I take to be most common, is this: That these persons were possessed, and inhabited, acted, governed and influenced by some evil spirit,

DISC. or spirits; there having been in some of
 II. these persons one, in others many of these
 evil spirits.

And I reckon, that most in our times suppose these evil spirits to have been bad, or fallen angels, some of the companions, instruments, and agents of him, who is the chief of fallen angels, and called *Satan*, or *Beelzebub*, or *the Devil*, by way of eminence.

This I take to be the opinion of the vulgar. It obtains also very much among the learned. We have these words of a great and eminent writer in a late defense and vindication of our blessed Saviour's miracles against modern cavils and objections. He is speaking of the two men at the tombs, and the drowning of the herd of swine. "So (c) that even this per-
 " mission of Jesus to the evil spirits was
 " amply compensated by casting an whole
 " legion of devils out of one person, that
 " is, by suffering about three of them to
 " enter into each hog, instead of about
 " six thousand of them keeping possession
 " of one man. And this dispossession of

(c) See Bp. Smallbrook's *Vindication of our Saviour's Miracles*,
 Vol. I. p. 203.

" those

“ those evil spirits, and permission given D I S C.
 “ them in consequence of it, were argu- II.
 “ ments of great force to shew the power
 “ of Jesus, over so numerous a regiment
 “ of them.” So that great author.

The number of the spirits that had taken possession of the unhappy man is here inferred and concluded from his calling himself *Legion*. A Roman legion at that time usually consisted of six thousand soldiers or more. That learned writer therefore supposeth, that there were about so many evil spirits in that man. And when those spirits were cast out of the man, there being about two thousand swine that were drowned in the sea, the same writer supposeth, that each swine became possessed, and was hurried down the precipice by three devils.

Every one perhaps does not judge it needful to conclude, that there were exactly such a number of spirits in the man, because he called himself *Legion* : but it is generally supposed, that there were in him very many evil (e) spirits.

It

(e) “ Jesus asked him, saying : *What is thy name*. Which question was not asked to gratify his own, or others curiosity : but for this good end, that the *Gadarens* might see

DISC. It being thought, that these persons

II. were possessed and tormented by one or more evil spirits, whereas such cases are now very uncommon among us, if there are any at all; it has been supposed, that * it might be wisely allowed of and suffered by the divine being at that time. Satan and his instruments were then loosed, and permitted to possess and torment many persons in the land of *Judea*, and the adjoining countreys. Hereby the power of Jesus, the Messiah, was rendered the more conspicuous, by delivering men from those possessions, and all the infirmities consequent upon them. Since which time, and especially since the power of miracles has ceased in the Church, Satan has not been permitted to torment men in this world in

what a miserable condition their countryman was in, and be more sensible of the mercy of his cure, and their own great danger amidst such vast numbers of evil spirits, as then swarmed amongst them: since so many had taken possession of that one unhappy man, as to deserve the name of *Legion*, (above six thousand,) as one of them told our Lord in the name of the rest, in answer to his question: *My name is Legion, for we are many.*" *Fr. Briggs on our Saviour's Miracles.* Vol. I. p. 75.

* He cast out evil spirits, who by the divine Providence were permitted to exert themselves at that time, and to possess many persons. *Dr. Fortin's Remarks upon Ecclesiastical Historie.* Vol. II. p. 17. See the same, Vol. I. p. 14.

that

that extraordinarie and remarkable manner. Disc.
II.

This I take to be the prevailing sentiment of learned and unlearned, and the scheme that has been formed concerning this point.

The other opinion, less common, is, that these cases were distempers only, which the human frame is subject to in this state of mortality, through it's weaknesse and imperfection, and the accidents it is exposed to, and the temper of particular constitutions, and the influences of diet, and the circumambient air, and other natural causes.

These are the two principal sentiments of moderns upon this head.

II. In the second place I am to shew, what was the general opinion in the time of our Saviour and his Apostles, and what notions men then formed of those cases, which are so frequently mentioned in the Gospels.

I shall endeavor to shew the ancient sentiment in several propositions and observations.

I. In the first place it is fit to observe the stile, or the several phrases and expressions

DISC. preffions made use of in the New Testament in speaking of this matter. For there can be no doubt, but the Evangelists have used the expressions, which obtained at that time.

H.

Matt. iv.
24.

viii. 16.

One expression, which frequently occurs, is *possessed with devils*. So in St. Matthew : *And his fame went throughout all Syria. And they brought unto him all sick people, that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils.* Again : *When the even was come, they brought unto him many, that were possessed with devils. And he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick.* The same Evangelist, speaking of the men in the countrey of the *Gadarens*, says :
v. 28. *There met him two possessed with devils.*

Another phrase very frequent in speaking of this matter is that of persons having *unclean spirits*. When our Lord sent forth
Matt. x. 1. the disciples, *he gave them power against unclean spirits, and to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sicknesse.* And St. Mark, v. 13. in the account of the man called Legion, says : *And forthwith Jesus gave them leave, and the unclean spirits went out, and entred into the swine.* It is in the Acts likewise,

likewise, v. 16. *There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits.* And at Samaria, Acts vii. 16. when Philip, the Deacon and Evangelist, was there, *unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many.* DISC.
II.

Sometimes the phrase is *unclean spirit* in the singular number. Matth. i. 23. *And there was in the synagogue a man with an unclean spirit.* And St. Mark useth also this same expression, ver. 2. of this chapter, speaking of the man called Legion: *When he was come out of the ship, there met him a man with an unclean spirit.* And at ver. 8. our Lord says: *Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit.*

There is another form of expression somewhat different from this in Luke iv. 33. *And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil.*

Sometimes they are called *evil* or *wicked* spirits. Luke vii. 21. *In that same hour he cured many of their infirmities, and plagues, and of evil spirits.* See also viii. 2. and elsewhere.

Disce. 2. Give me leave to observe in the

II. second place, that in speaking of this
 matter, particularly of persons *possessed with devils*, our translation is not exact : and instead of *devils*, the word *demons* would be much more proper : for that is the word, which we have in the Greek original, and in the ancient Latin version, and in many modern translations.

If any will be pleased to observe carefully, I believe they will find, that throughout the New Testament there is but one evil spirit called Devil : who is supposed to be the chief or prince of the fallen angels, and is often called *Satan* and *Beelzebub*. Nor is that word once used in the plural number, in the New Testament, where *Satan*, or the fallen angels are spoken of,

That the Scripture supposes but one evil being, or spirit, called *the devil*, may be easily perceived by every one from some plain texts. Matth. xxv. 41. *Then shall he say unto them on the left hand : Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil, and his angels.* Rev. xii. 9. *The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan.* Again Acts xiii. 10. St. Paul says to *Elymas*, the Sorcerer :

Sorcerer : *Thou child of the devil*, or of D I S C. II.
Satan, that wicked one, prince of evil

spirits. *James iv. 7. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 1. Pet v. 8. Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversarie, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.* Here the original word is rightly rendred. And every one may perceive, that hereby is meant, that one great tempter and seducer of mankind, called *Satan*, and the prince of evil spirits. This is that evil being, by whom our Lord is said to have been tempted in the wildernesse. *Matt. iv. 1. Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit, to be tempted of the devil. Mark i. 12. And he was there in the wildernesse forty days tempted of Satan.*

There is therefore but one evil spirit, meant by that word in scripture : and wherever we have it in our translation in the plural number, the original word is demons. For instance : *1 Cor. x. 20. Now I say, that the things, which the Gentils sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, not to God.* The original word is demons. [*Δαίμονες.*] And so throughout that context the word *demons* should be put in the translation,

Disc. tion, in the room of that which we have.
 II. *Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons. Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of demons. This is the exact and literal version of that place.*

For settling this matter, and for giving full satisfaction to such as are not able to consult the original language of the New-Testament, I would take notice of a few more places. Matt. x. 8. Our Lord said to the disciples, when he sent them forth from him : *Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils.* In the Greek it is : *Cast out demons.* Matt. xiii. 27. *If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out ?* It should be rendred *demons.* As also ver. 28. *But if I cast out devils : rather demons : by the finger of God, then is the kingdom of God come unto you.* And what is said of *Marie Magdalen* Luke viii. should be thus rendred : *Out of whom went seven demons.* And James ii. 19. *Thou believest, that there is one God. The devils also believe, and tremble.* In the original it is *demons.*

3. It is somewhat difficult to determine, what

what ought to be understood by the word *Disc.*
demon, as used in the New Testament. II.

It is likely, that many now by *demons* understand fallen angels. But at present our inquirie is, what was the meaning of the evangelical writers: in what sense this word was used by them, and was used and understood by their contemporaries, or those who lived in the times of Christ, and his Apostles. And though it may be difficult to determine this point with full and absolute certainty; yet there are some reasons, which may dispose us to think, they thereby meant *the souls of bad men*.

The word *demon*, used in the Gospels, and in other parts of the New Testament, is very frequent in Greek authors. And in those profane authors, as we call them, the word has various senses. It sometimes denotes (f) God himself, or the supreme Deity:

(f) Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡ τοῦ δαίμονος περὶ τὰ, ὅφ' ἦς αὐτὸ σαζο-
μεθα, κ. λ. Ap. Dionys. Hal. Antiq. Roman. l. 10. cap. x.
p. 607. ed Hudson. And see Cudworth's Intellectual System,
B. i. ch. iv. p. 26—263. edit. 1678.

I shall transcribe here an article of an ancient lexicographer. Whereby it appears, that in ancient Heathen Writers god and *demon* are often used, as equivalent: and that Socrates, once at least, called the supreme governour of the world, *the chief demon*, Θεός, καὶ Δεὸς, καὶ δαίμονες. Οὐ-

DISC. Deity : sometimes an inferior deity, and
 II. sometimes those genii, or lower orders of
 spirits, of which some were reputed good,
 others bad.

In the New Testament the word is almost always used in a bad sense, to denote an evil, or impure spirit. Nevertheless in one place we may allow it to be taken in a good sense. Acts xvii. 18. When St. Paul was at Athens, some said of him : *He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods* : in the original, *strange demons*. ξένων δαιμονίων. Those persons imagined, that St. Paul designed to recommend to them, and introduce among them, the worship of some foreign demons, or gods of another city and countrey, not received in their city. As they were Heathens, they may be supposed to have used the word in a

τὸ γὰρ ὁμήρῳ δοκεῖ, δαίμονας καλεῖν θεούς. Καὶ πάλαι
 δὲ τὸν θεὸν πάντες κυβερνήτην, μέγιστον δαίμονα ἱεομασ-
 σεν. Ἐχει δὴ τῆς αὐτῆς χρείας τὸ θεῖον, καὶ τὸ δαιμό-
 νιον. J. Pollac. Onom. l. i. sect. i. Conf. Platon. Politic. T. 2.
 p. 272. E. Serran.

And what is sometimes called *the demon*, is at other times called *the god of Socrates*. Μαθητῶν, ὁ σωκράτης.
 ὅτι δὴ σὺ τὸ δαιμόνιον φῆς σαυτῷ ἐκείνῳ γίγνεσθαι,
 Platon. Euthyph. T. i. p. 3. B. Vid. et Apol. Socr. p. 40. et
 alibi. Maximus Tyrius has two chapters, entitled in this
 manner. Τί τὸ δαιμόνιον σωκράτους. Ἐπὶ αὐτῷ ὅς σωκρά-
 τος δαιμόνιον. The chapter of Apuleius upon the same
 subject is entitled, De Deo Socratis.

good

good sense. But generally, for certain, Disc.
 in the New Testament, and ever since, II.
 among all Christian writers, the word has }
 been used to denote an evil spirit.

And there are remaining some passages of ancient authors, which may be of no small service for assuring us, what was meant by this word among Jewish people, and by the writers of the New Testament. One is a passage of *Josephus*, the celebrated Jewish historian, who was contemporarie with Christ's Apostles. He says, "That (g) demons are the spirits of wicked men, who enter into living men, and destroy them, unless they are so happy as to meet with speedy relief." Another is a passage of *Justin Martyr*, a Christian writer, born of Greek parents in the countrey of *Samaria*, who flourished about the middle of the second centurie. He is arguing for a future state, and among other things he there speaks " (b) of those who are seized

(g) Τα δὲ καλέωμεν δαιμόνια, ταῦτα δὲ πονηρῶν ἐ-
 σιν ἀνθρώπων πνύματα τοῖς ζῶσιν ἐσδυόμενα, καὶ κτεί-
 νοῦν τῆς σῶσθαι μὴ τυγχάνουσιν. *De Bell. Jud. l. vii.*
c. 25. al. cap. vi. sect. 3.

(b) Καὶ οἱ ψυχῆς ἀποθανόντων λαμβανόμενοι καὶ ῥιπτέ-
 μενοι ἀνθρώποι, ὡς δαιμονολήπται καὶ μαινομένους καλεῖται
 πάντες. *Justin. Ap. l. al. 2. p. 65. Par. 1620. p. 54. ed.*
Bened.

and

DISC. and tormented by the souls of the dead,
II. whom all call demoniacs and madmen."

And there are many other (i) authors, to whom I might refer, as countenancing this opinion.

This sense of the word may also be argued from divers texts of the New Testament, some of which have been already quoted, 1 Cor. x. 20. *The things, which the Gentils sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons,*

(i) — εἶναι τε πάντα τὸν αἶρα ψυχῶν ἑμπλησίων καὶ τῆς δαίμονας τε καὶ ἡρώας νομίζουσιν καὶ ὑπὸ τούτων πείμνεται ἀνθρώποις τὰς τε ὀνείρους, καὶ τὰ σημεῖα νόσον τε καὶ ὑγιάας. κ. λ. Pythagoras. *Ap. Diog. Laert. in vita Pythagorae. n. 32. p. 514.*

Plerique tamen ex Platonis magisterio, daemones putant animas corporeo munere liberatas: laudabilium quoque virorum aethereos daemones, improborum vero nocentes. *Cicero. in Platon. Tim. cap. 135. p. 330.*

In *Crisostom's* time some demoniacs would say, that they were possessed by the soul of such, or such a monk. Which must have been owing to a common opinion, that demons were the souls of dead men. Τί ἔν, ὅτι οἱ δαίμονες λέγουσι, ὅτι μοναχῶν τῶν δαίμονος ἢ ψυχῆς εἰμί, φησι. *Crisost. de Lazaro. Cenc. 2. Tom. i. p. 728.*

Αὐτοί, φησιν, οἱ δαιμονῶντες βοῶσιν, ὅτι ψυχὴ τῶν δαίμονος ἐγώ. *In Matt. hom. 28. al. 29. Tom. 7. p. 336. C.*

He mentions it as the common opinion of meaner people in his time, that the souls of all who died a violent death, became demons. Καὶ ὅ πολλοὶ τῶν ἀφελειτέρων νομίζουσι τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν βιάιῳ θανάτῳ τελευτῶντων δαίμονας γίνεσθαι. *De Laz. Sermon. 2. Tom. i. p. 727. E. Vid. et Tertullian. De Anima. cap. 57. p. 355.*

not to God. Now the Heathen deities, or Disc. demons, to whom they offered sacrifices, II. were not angels good or bad, of whom it does not appear, that the ancient Greeks and Romans had any notion, but departed heroes, or the souls of men, whom they respected, but whom the Jews, the worshipers and servants of the one God, always considered as evil beings.

Moreover, Heathen deities are often spoken of in the Old Testament, as dead men, or demons. Among directions given to the Israelites, it is said, *Levit. xvii. 7. And they shall no more offer their sacrifices to devils: or demons.* Which is the word in the ancient Greek translation, made from the Hebrew before the time of our Saviour. And *Pf. xcvi. 5. For all the gods of the nations are idols.* The same ancient Greek version, called that of the seventy Jewish Elders, render it. *All the gods of the nations are demons*, meaning dead men, or the souls of such. *Pf. cvi. 37.* Among the offenses of the people of Israel this is reckoned up, when they forsook God, and turned idolaters, in imitation of the Heathens: *They sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils.* It should rather

E

be

DISC. be rendred *demons*. And that thereby is meant dead men, or their departed spirits, is manifest from the same psalm, ver. 28.

II.

They joined themselves to Baal-Peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead. And herein is shewn the absurdity of the Jewish people, when, instead of inquiring of God, they applied to Heathen idols, who were dead men, and incapable of giving any counsel.

II. viii. 19. *Should not a people seek unto their God! For the living to the dead! How strange is that conduct! What infatuation!* Deut. xxxii. 15, *But Jeshurun waxed fat, and provoked the Lord to anger. They sacrificed to demons, not to God.*

The word *demon* therefore being used not only by Heathens themselves, for their deities, but also, and that not seldom, in the sacred scriptures: and Heathen deities being generally supposed to be dead men, or departed spirits; there is some reason to think, this is what is meant, when any are spoken of as under their influence.

However, notwithstanding the speciousness of this argument, I choose to leave the point undecided, and to submit it to every one's Judgement to think, as he pleaseth.

4. I would observe, that among the Jews DISC.
it was a general opinion, that neither the II.
punishment of fallen angels, nor of bad }
men, was to be compleated, till the great
day of the general Judgement.

Concerning the fallen angels, I before
referred * to places in the second epistle of
St. Peter, and the epistle of St. Jude: where
they are spoken of, as *reserved unto judge-*
ment, or unto the judgement of the great
day. It is the same with regard to men.
Therefore St. Peter says, 2 ep. iii. 7. *The*
heavens and the earth, which are now, by the
same word are kept in store, reserved unto
fire, against the day of judgement, and per-
dition of ungodly men.

Their punishment therefore not being
yet full and compleat, it was the opinion
of many, that for serving the wise ends
of Providence, some of these beings, both
fallen angels, and the departed souls of
men, were permitted to come abroad, out
of hades, the receptacle of spirits.

It was certainly the common opinion,
(whether there was any ground for it, or

* See p. 13.

Disc. not,) that (l) the region of our air was
 II. filled with invifible beings. *Chryfoftom*
 reckons it among the favours of Providence,
 that (m) when the air is full of demons
 and adverfe powers, we do not difcern
 them. For the fight of them might
 frighten us out of our wits, if not to death.
Caffian (n) fpeaks to the like purpofe. The
 great *Eufebius* of *Cefarea* fupposed thefe
 fpirits, or at leaft many of them, to be fallen
 angels. “ He fays, that (o) when they

(l) Οὗτοι τοιοῦν οἱ ἄγγελοι οἱ ἐκπεσόντες τῶν οὐρανῶν,
 οὗτοι δὲ αἰεὶς ἔχοντες καὶ τὸ γινώ, ἐκείνι εἰς τὰ ὑπερβάνια ὑ-
 περκύβηται δυνάμεις, καὶ αἱ τῶν γιγάντων ψυχαί, οἱ οὗτοι
 δὲ κόσμον εἰσὶ πλανώμενοι δαίμονες. *Athenag. Apol.*
 p. 28. B.

(m) Πόσοι δαίμονες εἰς τὴν αἰεὶς φέρονται σῶτον; πόσαι
 ἐναντία δυνάμεις; εἰ μόνον ἐπέτρεψεν αὐτοῖς τὸ οὐκ εἶναι
 ἐαυτῶν δεῖξαι τὸ φοβερὸν ἐκείνῳ καὶ ἀτερπὴν, ἐκ αὐτῶν ἡέσθη-
 μος; ἐκ αὐτῶν ἀπολώμεθα; ἐκ αὐτῶν διεφθάρημεν; *Cbr. in Ps.*
 xli. Tom. v. p. 137.

(n) Tanta verò spirituum densitate confitatus est aer
 iste, qui inter coelum terramque diffunditur, in quo non
 quieti, non otiosi pervolitant: ut satis utiliter humanis as-
 pectibus eos providentia divina absconderit, et subtraxerit,
 &c. *Cassian. Coll. 8. cap. xii. Ap. Bib. PP. Tom, 7.*

Vid. et Euseb. Dem. Ev. l. x. p. 502. C. D.

(o) — τὸ ἐφαρμόζοντα τοῖς δυνάεσι χῶρον, κείσει
 δικαία, καὶ ἀποφάσει τὸ μέγαλον θεῶν τάρταρον οἰκεῖν, ὃν
 ἀβυσσῶν οἱ θεοὶ λόγοι περσαγορεύουσιν, καὶ σκότος —
 ὃν βραχὺ τι καὶ μικρὸν ἀπόσπασμα, γυμνασίῳ χάριν τῶν
 φρεσείας ἀθλητῶν, ἀμοιβὴν γινώ, καὶ ὑπὸ σελήνῳ αἰεὶς κα-
 ταλειφθῆν. *Euseb. Pr. Ev. l. 7. c. 16. p. 329.*

“ had

183.

“ had finned, and for their transgression Disc.
 “ were expelled the heavenly abodes; a II.
 “ large part of them were thrust into
 “ hell, called the abyſſe, and confined
 “ there. Others of them were ſuffered
 “ to dwell near the moon, and in the
 “ region of the air, below the moon, and
 “ near our earth.”

This alſo was a common opinion of the
 Heathen people concerning their inferior
 deities, that they were in the air, near the
 earth. And (p) they were ſuppoſed by

(p) Ὅτι δὲ γὰρ πλείους τινες ὄντες καὶ καταχθόνιοι
 — τὰ τοῖς νεκρῶν καὶ μνήμασι — αἵμασι τε καὶ λυθροῖς, καὶ
 παντοίων ζώων σώμασι, τῇ τε ἐκ τῆς ἀναθυμιάμας, καὶ
 ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἑκαμιζομένων ἀναδύσει χαίροντες. *Præf. Ev.*
l. 5. p. 181. B.

Τοιαῦται γὰρ ὁ τῆς δαιμόνων τρέφοι, ἅτ' ἂν μὴ τῇ κνίσ-
 σῃ, καὶ τῷ καπνῷ, καὶ τοῖς αἵμασιν αὐτῶν θιερὰ πίνουσι,
 καθάπερ κύνες αἱμοβόροι καὶ λίχνοι φεγγαγίνονται λάφον-
 τες· ὅτ' ἂν ὅ μὴδεις ὁ ταῦτα παρέχων ᾗ, καθάπερ τινὲς
 λιμῷ διασθῆενται. *Chr. de S. Babyla. Contr. Julian. et*
Gentiles. Tom. 2, p. 558.

Nisi forte hostiarum deus animas devorat, aut ex aris
 ardentibus nidorem confectatur et fumos. &c. *Arnob. l. 7.*
in. p. 212.

Ὅρῳ δ' ὑμᾶς μάλα χαίροντας τῷ καπνῷ, καὶ τῷ ὕμ-
 νῳ ταύτῃ ἡδίστῳ διομόνῃ, ὅποταν εἰς τὸ θρανὸν ἡ
 κνία γίνηται ἐλισσομένη περὶ καπνῷ. *Lucian. Prometh.*
T. i. p. 183. ed. Graev.

Vid. et idem de Sacrificiis. ib. p. 366. et Porphy. de Abst.
l. 2. cap. 42. p. 86. ed. Cantabr. et Aristoph. Aves. ver.
183. et seqq. et ver. 1515. et seqq. ed. Kust.

DISC. many to subsist in part by fumes of incense, and the steams of slain beasts offered to them in sacrifice.

II.

To these, whether fallen angels, or spirits of another kind, St. Paul (q) is thought to refer, when he says, Eph. vi. 11, 12. *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood: we contend not with men only: but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darknesse of this world, against spiritual wickednesse in high places: that is, against wicked spirits, that are in the upper regions above us, or in the air, as he plainly expresseth it. ch. ii. 2. Wherein, in time past, ye walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air.*

5. All these evil spirits, in general, (whether fallen angels, or others,) were supposed to be in a subjection to Satan, or the Devil, who is their head and prince. At lest this was the opinion of the Jewish people, as will be shewn presently. However, it was fit to be mentioned here. And it appears from the texts of St. Paul,

(q) *Vid. Euseb. Pr. Ev. l. 7. p. 329. D.*

just cited. He desires, that the *Ephesians* DISC.
 might be able to stand against the wiles of II.
the devil. And then adds: *For we wrestle*
against principalities, and powers, and spi-
ritual wickednesse in high places. They
 therefore were under him. And in the
 other place he speaks expressly of *the prince*
of the power of the air, the spirit, that now
worketh in the children of disobedience: un-
 doubtedly meaning Satan, even him, who
 is the evil one by way of distinction, and
 the great tempter and seducer of mankind.

6. These evil spirits, or demons, (whether fallen angels or souls of bad men,) were supposed to be, under Satan their head, the instruments of many afflictions and inconveniences to men in this mortal frame.

This is evident from many places in the Gospels, where those unhappy persons are mentioned, who are said to have *an unclean spirit*, or to be *possessed of devils*, as we sometimes render the word, but who would be more properly said to be *demoniacs*, that is, affected by one, or more demons. I shall remind you of several instances.

Madnesse, or distraction, is one evil, often ascribed to them. This was the case of the

DISC. two men at the tombs, who were exceeding fierce, and one of them at least had been thus afflicted for a long season, and when confined, and chained, had broken his bands. This was one of the opprobrious reflections cast upon our Saviour. John x. 20, 21. *Many (r) of them said: he has a demon, and is mad. Why bear ye him? Others said: These are not the words of a demoniac. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?*

There are several other indispositions, which are ascribed to them. Matt. ix. 32, 33. *And as they went out, they brought unto him, a dumb man possessed with a devil: literally, a dumb man, a demoniac: ἀνθρώπον κωφὸν δαίμονιζόμενον. And when the demon was gone out, the dumb man spake, and the multitude marvelled.*

In the xii. chapter of the same Gospel, ver. 22. and therefore, certainly, another case. *There was brought to him, a man possessed with a devil, or a demoniac, δαίμονιζόμενος, blind and dumb. And he healed him: insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. In St. Luke xi.*

(r) Ἐλέγον ὅτι πολλοὶ ἔκ αὐτοῦ δαίμονιον ἔχει, καὶ μαίνεται. κ. λ.

14. the same miracle is thus related. *And he was casting out a demon. And it came to pass, when the demon was gone out, the dumb spake, and the people wondered.* DISC.
II.

Mark ix. 25. *When Jesus saw, that the people came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him: Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.* That is the young man, who was brought to the disciples, when our Lord was on the mount, and they could not cure him. He was plainly epileptical. And besides, either constantly, or at least under the paroxysms of his distemper, was deaf and dumb.

Mark i. 23, 26. *And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, saying: Let us alone, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth. And Jesus rebuked him, saying: Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.* This person, as I suppose every one may allow, had the epilepsie, or falling sicknesse, and it is ascribed to an unclean spirit. The same historie is in Luke iv. 33.—35.

Once

DISC. Once more. Luke xiii. 11.—16. *And behold, there was a woman, which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed down, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her: Woman, thou art loosed from thy infirmity.* The ruler of the synagogue pretending to take offense, because it was the sabbath day, our Lord, beside other things, said: *Ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound, lo, these eighteen years, to be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?*

Here Satan himself is considered, as the cause of this infirmity: though, very frequently, these cases are spoken of as effects of the malicious influences of demons. The reason is, that 'Satan is their prince and ruler, and what is done by instruments, or subjects, with the approbation of a ruler, or principal agent, is fitly ascribed to him.

And, not to mention any more particular instances, it seems, that the Jewish people supposed, Satan and his instruments, that is, demons, evil spirits, to be capable of inflicting almost all sorts of diseases.

diseases. St. Peter therefore, at the house of *Cornelius*, as his discourse is summarily rehearsed, Acts x. 31. says : *You know, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power : who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the devil. For God was with him.* D I S C. II.

7. I must proceed to observe farther, for shewing the sentiment of the Jewish people in our Saviour's time, that they supposed, the distempers, or torments, afflicted by evil spirits, might be removed, or cured.

So *Josephus* said in a passage cited above, that these evils were mortal, unless speedy relief was obtained.

Doubtless the Jews believed, that these inconveniences might be removed by the divine disposal, and by a Prophet, speaking in the name of God, who had power of working miracles. Therefore many, who believed Jesus to be a Prophet, and the Messiah, brought such cases to him for cure.

They likewise supposed, that demons might be exorcised or adjured out of the bodies of men, of which they had taken possession. St. *Luke* informs us, that at *Ephesus*, certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists,

DISC. *orcists, took upon them to call over them that*
 II. *had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus,*
saying: I adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul
preacheth. Acts xix. 13.

It is likely, that from the miracles, which they had seen wrought by Paul, those exorcists hoped for better success by making use of the name of Jesus, than by their common forms and methods of exorcism.

That exorcisms were used by the Jews, we are expressly assured (s) by *Josephus*. He speaks, as if *Solomon* had left some prescriptions for these cases, and directed to the use of herbs and roots, that would be of great advantage.

I have now shewn, what were the Jewish sentiments upon this head in the time of our Saviour and his Apostles, and when the books of the New Testament were writ.

8. It is fit, I should add, that there were demoniacs likewise among the Heathens about the same time: that is, there were many among them, who had indispositions, which were reputed to be owing to the influence of demons.

(s) *Antiq. Jud. l. 8. cap. ii. sect. 5.*

DISC.
II.

Some learned men have denied, or overlooked this. They have gone upon a supposition, that such cases were to be found among the Jews only, and in their own country. But that is manifestly a mistake, as may be shewn from the New Testament itself. Matt. xv. 21, 22. *Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying: Have mercie on me, o Lord, thou son of David. My daughter is grievously vexed with a demon: St. Mark has the same historie, ch. vii. 24. 26. And thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon. And a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came, and fell at his feet: [the woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation:] and she besought him, that he would cast forth the demon out of her daughter. And ver. 29, 30. And he said unto her: the demon is gone out of thy daughter. And when she was come to her house, she found the demon gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.*

The affair at Ephesus, just taken notice of, is another proof. The young maiden

at

DISC. at *Philippi*, who had a *spirit of divination*,
 II. is a third instance. Acts, xvi. 16, 18.

Many proofs of this might be alledged from Heathen * writers. But I forbear to take notice of them.

Undoubtedly, there was a difference between the Jews and them in some respects. The Jews thought all demons in general to be evil and unclean. But the Heathens esteemed many demons to be good. For they were among their deities. And therefore in some cases they might the more respect some people for having a demon, though the patient himself was unhappy. However, it is certain, that there were among the Heathens at this time many people, who had indispositions, which are ascribed to demons.

We have now made good progress in this argument. The next thing to be inquired into is, what is the most reasonable opinion concerning these cases. But that must be reserved for another season.

In the mean time, we may hence take

* See an Enquiry, and a further Enquiry into the meaning of demoniacs in the New Testament. See likewise Mr. W. Weston's Enquiry into the rejection of the Christian Miracles by the Heathens. p. 231. 233. and elsewhere.

occasion,

occasion, as some of old did, who were Disc. witnesses of our saviour's miracles, to praise II.

God, who had given such power unto men.

Matt. ix. 8. Says the Evangelist : *When the even was come, they brought unto him many demoniacs. And he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the Prophet, saying : Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.* Matt. viii. 16. 17.

The like gift did Jesus confer upon his disciples. *He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease.* Matt. x. 1. Which power they displayed in the most honorable manner after his ascension. And it was a great benefit to the men of that age to have their diseases so cured. But the principal use, and the greatest benefit of those wonderful works, both to the men of that time, and to us, is, that they ascertained and confirmed the excellent and important doctrine of the gospel : which is so suited to improve and exalt our minds, to cure evil affections, and deliver us from the malignant influence of all the snares and temptations of Satan, and this evil world.

Which

DISC. Which if we overcome, we shall in the
II. end attain to a world, where there are no
 sicknesses, nor sorrows: where no evil
 men, nor evil spirits, shall enter: where
 good men of all ages shall be united in one
 happy and glorious society, and shall be
 forever with the Lord.



DISC. And to us, is that they attended
 and continued the excellent and important
 doctrine of the gospel: which is to lead
 to improve and exalt our minds, to cure
 evil affections, and deliver us from the ma-
 lignant influence of all the wiles and
 temptations of Satan, and this evil world.
 Which

DISCOURSE III.

MARK v. 19.

Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him: Go home to thy friends, and tell them, how great things the Lord has done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

WE now proceed to the third head DISC.
III.
of discourse, under which we
are to consider, what is really
the truth, or what idea we ought to form
of those unhappy persons, who in the
New Testament are spoken of as having
an unclean spirit.

Here I certainly intend to speak my mind
freely, and to shew plainly what appears
to me to be the truth. Nevertheless I
am under little, or no apprehension of
giving offense: partly, because I think, I
may relye upon the candour of those who
hear me: partly, because I do not desire
to impose a particular sentiment upon any.

F

All

DISC. All are at liberty to judge for themselves,
 III. when they have heard and considered
 what may be said on one side, or another.
 For no one opinion concerning these cases
 is like those articles of faith: that Jesus
 is the Christ, that he lived and died in
 Judea, and rose again, and ascended into
 heaven, and will come again to judge men
 according to their works: or, that he and
 his Apostles wrought many wonderful
 works of an extraordinarie nature.

Whether the indispositions, that these
 persons laboured under, were owing to the
 influence of evil spirits, or not, the cure of
 them was miraculous. Nor is the miracle
 at all lessened by supposing them to be
 only grievous and long continued bodily
 distempers. The (u) rectifying the human
 frame,

(u) "Now which is an instance of the greatest power, to
 command an inferior to depart one's presence, which if he
 refuses to do, one can turn him out, whether he will, or
 not? or to correct the juices and solids of a disordered
 body, and regulate it's motions by a word? There seems
 to be no comparison in the instances of power. And there-
 fore I think it more to the credit of the miracle, and
 more to our Saviour's glorie, to have cured the unhappy
 people, in the manner by me contended for, than in the
 other." *Further Enquiry into the meaning of Demoniacs in
 the N. T. p. 107.*

frame, all on a sudden, which had been DISC.
before greatly disordered, is at least as great III.
a work, as commanding an evil spirit, to
leave the body, or any other particular
place.

Were I to attempt to represent the displays of the divine perfections in the works of nature, and the more conspicuous parts of the visible creation, and to observe the greatness, the number, the wonderful disposition, and regular order and motions of the heavenly bodies: should I do this upon the ground of the now prevailing scheme of modern philosophie; it is likely, it would give no offense to any: though the present scheme is very different from the sentiment of the ancients: and though there are divers texts of Scripture which suppose, or countenance the opinion, that prevailed in ancient times.

The sun, says the Psalmist, is as a bride-

Ills penchent a croire, que leurs maladies étoient naturelles, mais que les causes en étoient inconnues. Cette opinion ne me scandaliseroit point. La raison en est, que les miracles de N. S. qui les guerissoit n'en font que plus grands. Car que des etres intelligens obeïssent au commandement de J. C. cela n'est pas si miraculeuse, que de commander à des maladies, et de les faire cesser par un simple ordre. *Beausobre Remarques sur le N. T. p. 14.*

DISC. groom, coming out of his chamber, and re-

III. joiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it. Ps. xix. 5. 6.

Again: He has appointed the moon for seasons, and the sun knows his going down. Ps. civ. 19. And in ver. 5 of the same Psalm, it is spoken of as one of the wonderful works of God, that he has laid the foundations of the earth, so that it should not be removed forever.

Yet it is now generally supposed, that the sun is the fixed centre of our grand system, and that the earth, beside it's diurnal rotation about it's own axis, makes an annual revolution about the sun.

The ancient Christians, and others, almost universally supposed, that our earth is a flat, with here and there rising hills and mountains. And could by no means allow, that there were any inhabitants in that part of the earth, which was opposite to themselves. We think the earth to be globose, and find no difficulty to believe, that it is inhabited all round, on every side.

Nor do we judge those to have been enemies to mankind, or to the Sacred Scriptures, who have taken pains to confute

fute and overthrow the once established opinions, and to shew, that the Scriptures, without deciding any thing in those points, only use the common way of speaking, DISC.
III.

If the like should be attempted by any with regard to some ancient opinions, concerning the supposed agence of evil spirits; I presume, there would be no reason to be offended, provided their sentiment be modestly proposed, and with a view to promote knowledge among Christians.

The opinions of modern interpreters, other Christians, concerning the case of those, who are spoken of as having unclean spirits, you may remember were these two: one, more generally received, which allows, that they were real possessions: the other less common, that they were mere bodily diseases, and indispositions: though it was then the prevailing opinion, that those disorders were caused by evil spirits. And those persons, and their friends, attributing these disorders to Satan, and demons under him, our Saviour often adapts his expressions to that opinion, without countenancing, or approving it.

That this last mentioned is the more just and probable account of these cases, may

DISC. appear from several considerations, which I
 III. shall now propound to you.

I. It having been in those times a very common opinion, that there were many evil spirits in the region of the air; it is not at all strange, that many people should live under apprehensions of suffering from them.

And many might be induced to ascribe to such spirits, and to their power and influence, several indispositions, and other calamities that befell them. Moreover some persons of a speculative and philosophical temper might think it best to cherish this opinion among the people, with a view to subserve divers ends and purposes, which they deemed innocent and useful: one of which might be promoting the belief of the existence of spirits, or invisible beings. Some there were, as the Sadducees among the Jews, who denied the existence of angels, and the souls of men after death. The Pharisees therefore, and some others, might lay hold of, and encourage the notion, that many bodily disorders were owing to evil spirits, the better to secure the persuasion of their real existence. For effects cannot be without causes. If such affecting

ing disorders proceeded from spirits, they have a being, though they are not visible. Disc. III.

This therefore may in some measure help us to account for the prevalence of this opinion, though it had no good foundation.

2. I observe, secondly, that the chief foundation of the opinion, of real possessions, may be called in question.

By the principal foundation of this opinion I mean the supposition of *the liberty of evil spirits*, either bad angels, or others, to rove about near this earth, in the region of the air.

The Jewish people might be in the right, in supposing, that neither the punishment of the fallen angels, nor bad men, was compleated before the day of general judgement. But does it thence follow, that till that time they were at liberty to go where they thought fit, and to do all the mischief they pleased, or were able to execute? St. Jude speaks indeed of the fallen angels being *reserved unto judgement*. But how? It is under confinement. His words are ver. 6. *And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation,*

DISC. *he has reserved in everlasting chains under*
 III. *darknesse, unto the judgement of the great day.*
 And St Peter : *God spared not the angels that*
fell, but delivered them into chains of dark-
nesse, to be reserved unto judgement. 2 Ep.
 ii. 4.

However, possibly, this argument may not be reckoned conclusive. For though many of the fallen angels are so confined, yet the expressions of St. Jude and St. Peter need not to be understood absolutely, and universally. For *Satan* is spoken of as *our adversarie, like a roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour.*

That therefore is all, which I have chosen to say : *that the principal foundation of this opinion may be called in question* : not intending to deny the liberty of Satan, and some other evil angels, to tempt and annoy men, with the divine permission. At the same time I perceive not any clear evidence of the permission of such numbers of evil angels to act upon this earth, as the common opinion supposes.

But if by *demons* be meant other evil spirits, different from fallen angels, then the supposition of their liberty seems to be altogether without foundation. In Is. lxiii.

16. the Jewish people are introduced by the Prophet, owning, that *Abraham was ignorant of them, and that Israel did not acknowledge them.* If good men are not allowed after death to concern themselves in the affairs of this world, not so much as of their own descendents; how can it be reasonable to think, that bad men are permitted after death, to concern themselves in our affairs, for injuring and tormenting us !

Disc.
III.

3. Allowing evil spirits the liberty, just mentioned, and also the power of inflicting some evils on men; it does not follow that ever there were any possessions, in the strict and gross sense of the word: that is, evil spirits, actuating and inhabiting the bodies of living men upon this earth.

4. It does not appear, that the common opinion of possessions has any support and countenance in the Old Testament.

Satan, it is true, is there represented as the great enemy and seducer of mankind. He tempted *Job*, and was permitted to bring upon him divers losses, and calamities. Still his power received farther enlargement. And then *Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord, and smote Job*

DISC. *Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot even unto his crown. Job ii. 7.* Here is a particular case, and it is very affecting. But yet it comes not up to possession: seizing the body of a man, discomposing his mind, and acting him at will and pleasure.

III.

I Sam. xvi. 14. It is said of Saul, that an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him: that is, he contracted a melancholic habit and disposition. For it was often soothed by musick. Said his attendants: *Let our Lord now command his servants to seek out a man, who is a skilful player on a harp. And it shall come to pass, that when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his band, and thou shalt be well.* David was sent for. *And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul; that David took an harp, and played with his band. So Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.*

Neither this, then, nor any thing else mentioned in the Old Testament, that I can recollect, countenanceth the supposition of that terrible case, which seems to be implied in the real possession of evil spirits.

And

And it is not unreasonable to conclude D I S C.
hence, that (x) the notion of possessions III.
was received by the Jews from the Chal-
dean or Greek Philosophers, after the shut-
ting up of the canon of the Old Testa-
ment by the ancient Prophets.

5. We find not any instances of posses-
sions by good angels, or other good spirits.
Why then should possessions by evil spirits
be allowed of? Can it be reasonable to
suppose, that Divine Providence would
permit evil spirits to have more power to
do evil, than others have to do good?

There has been an opinion, maintained
by some, that every man has a tutelar, or
guardian angel. Others have supposed,
that every man has two angels attending
him, one good, the other bad: each sug-
gesting to him counsels and warnings, ac-
cording to their several dispositions, one
wishing his welfare, the other waiting for

(x) "The Jews seem to have received some additional
notions concerning evil spirits, and their operations, from
the Chaldeans, and, after their return from the captivity,
to have ascribed many diseases and disorders to these in-
visible agents, besides those, which were not to be ac-
counted for by natural causes." *Remarks on Ecclesiastical
History. Vol. i. p. 243.* So says Dr. Jortin, though he
allows, that there were real demoniacs. *See ibers. p. 14.
and 190.*

his

Disc. his halting. But these opinions, (though
 III. * destitute of all good authority,) do not
 amount to the thing, which we are speaking of. Nor are they by any means so unreasonable.

6. Possession by evil spirits is a thing in itself absurd and impossible, at the least unreasonable, and improbable, and not to be supposed, unless there be clear and full proof of it. Which, I think, there is not.

Man consists of soul and body. And it seems to be unsuitable to the wise methods of Providence, that other spirits should enter into any man, without his consent, and actuate and govern him. *There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding.* Job. xxxii.

8. *The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear?*

Prov. xviii. 14. The same wise man speaks of the spirit of a man, that goeth upward. Ecc. iii. 21. And St. Paul: *What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him.* 1 Cor. ii. 11. I refer also to Matth. x. 28. 1 Thes. v. 23.

* See Whitby upon Matt. xviii. 10. and Acts xii. 9.

2 Tim. iv. 22. Heb. xii. 9. not now to
take notice of any other places.

DISC.
III.

The Scripture therefore in agreement with reason, and † the general persuasion of mankind, supposes one soul or spirit in a man. And for other spirits to subsist therewith, and to controll and actuate all his powers and members, is an incongruity, that ought not to be admitted.

7. Real possessions seem inconsistent with the goodnesse of God.

I say, it seems to be inconsistent with the wisdom and goodnesse of the divine government, to allow of possessions, in the gross meaning of the word. If indeed, there were any clear and undeniable evidences of such a^r thing, we should be willing to do our best, to reconcile it to wisdom and goodnesse. But as there is not, that I know of, any clear and undoubted evidence of this fact, and the thing appears to be very strange and shocking; I apprehend, we may say, it *appears* to be inconsistent with the wisdom and goodnesse of God.

For let any man think with himself, if it be not a strange, and hard case, for a man to be put into the power of evil

† Mens sana in corpore sano.

spirits :

DISC. spirits : or for apostate angels, or other impure and wicked spirits, one or more of them, to be allowed to take possession of him, and to teaze and torment him, as they think fit. Is this suited to that state of trial, in which we now are? Such unhappy persons, it is true, are not cast into hell, nor fixed in a state of damnation. But apostate angels, or other infernal spirits, are supposed to be permitted to come to him, seize on him, torment, and distress him, and that for many years together.

Is this a supposition, that should be easily made, or allowed of? Can we fairly reconcile this to the wisdom and equity of the divine government?

Besides, from many things said in the Gospels it appears, that divers of the persons, there spoken of as *having evil spirits*, were not the worst of men. Yea for any thing we can perceive, divers of them were honest, virtuous persons. And some had labored under those distempers, commonly ascribed to evil spirits, from their youth, or from childhood, before they can be supposed to have been guilty of great and heinous transgressions.

This

This argument, if it does not hold DISC.
 against the supposition, that evil spirits may III.
 be sometimes permitted to inflict diseases :
 certainly has a good deal of force against
 possessions, especially in the gross sense, in
 which they have been understood and
 allowed of by some in late times.

8. Another argument against possessions
 arises from the manner, in which the per-
 sons, said to *have unclean spirits*, speak of
 our Lord Jesus Christ.

For such persons did often bear an ho-
 norable testimonie to our Lord. Luke iv.
 41. *And demons also came out of many cry-
 ing out, and saying : Thou art the Christ, the
 Son of God.* But it is incredible, that Sa-
 tan, or any other evil spirits, under his in-
 fluence and direction, should freely and
 chearfully bear witness to our Lord, as the
 Christ.

When the Pharisees reviled him, and
 said, that he cast out demons by Beelze-
 bub, the prince of demons, our Lord con-
 futed that reflection and charge by shewing,
 that the thing was very unlikely. So in
 Matt. xii. 25. 28. and elsewhere. For
 the doctrine taught by our Lord being con-
 trarie to the kingdom and interest of Satan,
 it

DISC. it was altogether improbable, that so subtle
 III. and malicious a spirit should concur with
 him for the support of it.

In like manner is it incredible, that any
 unclean spirits should chearfully bear tes-
 timonie to Jesus, as the Christ, the Son of
 God. Therefore that profession, or de-
 claration, did not proceed from such spirits,
 but from the unhappy, diseased persons,
 who under their melancholic affections,
 thought themselves to have demons, in
 conformity to the prevailing opinion, though
 they had not.

This is a much more reasonable way of
 accounting for this matter, than to suppose,
 that evil spirits openly professed Jesus to be
 the Christ, the Son of God.

Indeed this appears to me a very forcible
 argument. I have been sometimes apt to
 think, that this consideration has been
 overlooked by learned and pious men, who
 have so readily admitted real possessions.

However, it may be here said, that
 possibly this testimonie was not free and vo-
 luntarie, but constrained and compelled.
 To which I answer, that this cannot be
 said with good reason. Our Lord certainly
 did not constrain any such to bear that tes-
 timonie

timonie to him, and speak so of him. **Disc.**
 For he never received it, but disallowed of **III.**

it, and checked it: though afterwards, when those persons were by his mighty power delivered from the indispositions, under which they had labored, he was not unwilling, that they should bear witnesse to him, as we see in the case before us. *He bid the man go home to his friends, and tell them, how great things the Lord had done for him, and had compassion on him.*

9. All those persons who are spoken of as having demons, or an unclean spirit, had some bodily indisposition. Nor does it appear clearly from their historie, that there was any thing beside such indisposition.

That all these people had some bodily indisposition, is manifest, and cannot be denied by any. Some labored under distraction, as the men in the countrey of the *Gadarens*. Others had other disorders. *St. Peter, Acts x. 38.* gives this general account of our Lord's miraculous works. *Who went about doing good, and HEALING all that were oppressed by the devil.* Therefore they who were supposed to be under the oppression of Satan, had distempers, which

DISC. Lord *bealed*. Observable are the words of

III. *St. Matthew. ch. iv. 24. And his fame went throughout all Syria, and they brought unto him all sick people, that were taken with divers diseases, and torments, and those which were possessed of demons, or demoniacs, and those that were lunatic, and those that had the palse, and he HEALED them.*

These persons therefore are reckoned up among other sick people, and they are said to be *bealed*, or *cured* by the Lord Jesus, when brought to him.

Nor does it appear from the historie of these cases, that there was any thing more than bodily indispositions, and that discomposure of mind, which usually accompanies them.

Let us observe the historie of the young man, first brought to the disciples, when our Lord was in the mount, and then to himself, when he was come down, and is related by the first three Evangelists.

Matt. xvii. 14. 15. *And when they were come down to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying: Lord have mercie on my son, for he is lunatic, and sore vexed. For oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.*

water. *And I brought him to thy disciples,* DISC.
and they could not cure him. III.

That is the whole description of the case. But undoubtedly the affliction was supposed to be owing to an evil spirit. Therefore the cure is thus related by the same Evangelist. *And Jesus rebuked the demon, and he departed out of him, and the child was cured from that very hour.* ver. 18.

In the description, then, of this distemper, which appears to have been the epileptic, or falling sicknesse, the parent says, *his child was lunatic, and sore vexed*: that is, his distemper was influenced by the changes of the moon, and the fits, or paroxysms, were very violent, and more violent at some seasons than others. And does it not use to be so in such cases? What necessity is there, then, for the supposition of the agence, or interposition of evil spirits?

In Mark ix. 17. 18. the same case is represented in this manner. *One of the multitude answered: I have brought unto thee my son, which has a dumb spirit. And wheresoever he taketh him, he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away.*

DISC. *And I spake to thy disciples, that they should
 III. cast him out, and they could not.* ver. 20.

*And they brought him to him. And when he
 saw him, straitway the spirit tare him, and
 he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.
 It was a grievous epilepsie, a dangerous in-
 disposition, the convulsions were sometimes
 extremely violent, so that the young man
 had begun to pine away.*

*In St. Luke, ch. ix. 38, 39. the parent
 says: Master, I beseech thee, look upon my
 son, for he is my only child. And lo a spirit
 taketh him, and he suddenly cries out, and it
 teareth him, that he foameth again, and
 bruising him, hardly departeth from him.
 ver. 42. And as he was yet coming, the de-
 mon threw him down, and tare him. And
 Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed
 the child, and delivered him again to his
 father.*

*It was a sad epileptical disease. The
 convulsions were very violent. The fits
 were sometimes severe, and long: inso-
 much that his friends feared, he would
 never get out of them, but dye away in
 them. A thing not uncommon still in
 such cases. And yet we do not now, ge-
 nerally,*

nerally, introduce evil spirits as the causes of them. DISC.
III.

This, however, was a grievous and dangerous epileptic. And the cure performed by our Lord was a great and gracious work.

10. There were some in ancient times, who were of opinion, that those called demoniacs, were diseased only.

Undoubtedly, the other was the more prevailing opinion, but not universal. The Sadducees among the Jews must have had different apprehensions about these cases. But I choose not to take any particular notice of men, who were so unreasonable, as to deny the existence of angels, and separate spirits. See Acts. xxiii. 8.

I shall however observe what is said by *Origen*, who lived about two hundred years after our Lord's ascension, in his commentarie upon St. *Matthew's* Gospel. He is treating of the miracle wrought by our Lord upon the young man, brought to Christ by his father, after he was come down from the mount, of which we spoke just now. *Origen* himself believed the influence of demons in such cases.

Disc. cases. But he says, " That (y) Physicians
 III. endeavoured to account for them in a natural way: not allowing the agence of any impure spirits, but calling them bodily distempers." So said Physicians in those times. And they must be reckoned as good judges as any.

Plotinus, a celebrated Heathen Philosopher, who flourished about the middle of the third centurie, blames some, who (z) ascribed to demons diseases, which, as he says, may be accounted for in an ordinarie way, and indeed are owing to fatigue, excessse, indigestion, and other causes either internal or external, and are oftentimes cured by medicines.

And *Philostorge*, an ecclesiastical historian, at the begining of the fifth centurie, mentions (a) one *Pofidomius*, a learned

(y) ἱατροὶ μὴ οὐκ φυσιολογεῖσθαι, ἀλλὰ ἀκαθάρτου πνεύματος ἢ νομίζοντες καὶ τόπον, ἀλλὰ σωματικὸν σύμπτωμα. κλ. In *Matth.* Tom. xiii. Vol. i. p. 311. *Hues.* Vol. 3. p. 577. *Bened.*

(z) Νῦν δὲ προσεσάμενοι, τὰς νόσους δαιμόνια ἢ — πᾶσι μόνον ἐνφροσύναις καὶ ἀνὰ πείθειαν, ὥς ἔχ' αἱ νόσοι τὸς αἰτίας ἔχουσιν, ἢ καμάρτοις, ἢ πλησμοναίς, ἢ ἐνδύαις, ἢ σήψεισι, καὶ ὅλως μεταβολαῖς ἢ ἔξωθεν ἀρχῇ, ἢ ἐνδοθεν λαβύσσαις. Δηλοῖσι δὲ καὶ αἱ διαπραγαί αὐτῶν. κ. λ. *Plotin.* *Enn.* 2. lib. 9. cap. 14.

(a) Θεάσαντες δὲ τὴν ποσειδωνίαν ἐν ἰατρικῇ διαπρίποντα. λέγει δ' αὐτὴν ὁμοῦς ἐκ ὁρθῶς καὶ δαιμόνων ἐπιθέσει τὸν ἀνθρώπου ἐκκαυχάμενος, ὑγρῶν δὲ τινων κακοχυμῶν τὸ πάθος ἐργάζεσθαι. μὴ δὲ ἢ τὸ πάθος ἰσχυρῶς δαιμόνων, ἀνθρώπων φύσιν ἐπηράζεσθαι, *Philost.* l. 8. cap. 10.

Physician,

Physician, whom he knew, who ascribed D I S C.
all the bad symptoms of those called de- III.
moniacs to natural causes, and did not
believe, that demons had power to torment
men, though he did not deny their ex-
istence. That *Pofidonius* seems to have
been a Christian.

I might shew, that this has likewise
been the opinion of some judicious, and
thoughtful, and pious men of late times.
But as I suppose you to be rather determi-
ned by reason than authority, I forbear to
insist on their judgement.

I therefore would recommend to your
consideration the observations, which have
been now mentioned. Which seem to me
to render it very probable, that the af-
flictions, which those labored under, who
among the Jews were said to have a de-
mon, or unclean spirit, were mere bodily
distempers and indispositions. They are at
least, so far as I am able to judge, cogent
arguments against possessions, in the gross
sense of the word, as understood by some
learned men of late times.

There are however some difficulties, at-
tending this supposition, which shall be
taken notice of hereafter.

DISC.

III.

For the present, we may do well to collect some apostolical observations and admonitions. *Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.* 1 Cor. viii. 1. *Speaking the truth, in love, let us grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.* Eph. iv. 15.

Then are our minds rightly tempered in our inquiries after the true nature of things, when our first and greatest care is to please and glorify God: When we are humble, and diffident, sensible of the weaknesse of our capacities, and of our liableneffe to err: when we are disposed to think and judge according to evidence, and to embrace that as true, which appears to be founded in reason: when still we are willing to exercise charity and forbearance toward such as differ from us, and do not see things exactly in the same light that we do.

Some are greatly delighted with simplicity in all things. They enter not into any speculations about the orders, the powers, the ranks, or economie of invisible beings. Nor do they willingly admit their agence and interposition in human affairs in this life, our time and state of trial. Others love to multiply beings. And an intricate

intricate system, with a great variety of DISC. movements, pleaseth them best. They III. like frequent, or continual interpositions of good and bad spirits. And scarcely any thing happens in the world, but they ascribe it to their influence and causality.

Let every one be satisfied in his own mind, after serious and diligent inquiry. But let us take care, that by introducing numerous, inferior and intermediate beings, and their agency, we do not derogate from the divine empire and government, as supreme over all causes and things, visible and invisible.

And let us remain fully persuaded, that our blessed Lord's doctrine, authority, and character, were supported and attested by numerous miracles performed by him in healing every disease and affliction, to which the human frame is exposed, and in raising the dead. And that being himself raised from the dead, and ascended to heaven, and living for ever, he is able to bestow eternal life upon all those, who sincerely obey the reasonable precepts of true holiness delivered by him.

DIS-

DISCOURSE IV.

MARK v. 19.

Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him: Go home to thy friends, and tell them, how great things the Lord has done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

DISC.
IV.

I Have distinctly explained and improved the great cure, and miraculous work, here referred to. And the last time it was observed, that some are inclined to think, that the afflictions, which they laboured under, who are spoken of as having evil spirits, were mere bodily diseases and indispositions: though it was then the prevailing opinion, that they were under the power and influence of some evil spirit. And those persons themselves, and their friends, attributing their distempers to Satan, and demons under him, our Saviour sometimes adapts his expressions to that

that opinion, without countenancing, or approving it. Disc.
IV.

In favour of that sentiment divers arguments and considerations were proposed, taken from the reason of things, from the Old Testament, and from the historie and description of these very persons, and their cases, as recorded in the New Testament.

IV. What now remains to be spoken to is the fourth and last head, relating to this subject, the objections against the forementioned opinion, or the arguments in favour of real possessions.

I shall take notice of, and consider these four.

1. There might be such cases in former times, though there are none now.

2. There are divers things said of those persons, who were called demoniacs, which are very difficult, or even impossible to be accounted for, but by the supposition of real possessions, or the operation and interposition of evil spirits.

3. The Evangelists appear to have believed, that these persons had really one or more unclean spirits.

4. Our Lord himself does not oppose the

DISC. the opinion of real possessions, as he would
 IV. have done, it is likely, if not true.

Of these in order.

I. Obj. In the first place it is said, that there might be such cases in former times, though there are none now.

Possibly, such things may not be allowed of in the common and ordinarie course of Divine Providence. But yet might be permitted at the time of our Saviour's appearance, when there was an uncommon and effectual remedie at hand. Bad angels, or other evil spirits, might be then suffered to leave their confinement, and come abroad, and inflict grievous distempers upon men, especially in the land of *Judea*, and near it, that the power of Jesus might be rendred more conspicuous, by shewing his authority over them, and removing by his word those evils, which they had inflicted, and causing those malignant spirits to leave those persons, of whom they had taken possession.

To which I answer, that this supposition does not suit the histories related in the Gospels. For these cases do not there appear to be extraordinarie, but are looked upon by every body as ordinarie and usual things.

things. No one expresseth a surprize, that such people are brought to Jesus. His enemies never mention it, as a reproach, and dishonour to him, that their countrey was then infested with evil spirits. If people had been now all on a sudden seized with disorders, never heard of among them before, and if such cases had been numerous, would it not have occasioned the utmost astonishment? Would it not have raised a loud and general clamour? Would they not have thought, they had indeed good reason to say, when they saw the cures performed by Jesus and his disciples, that there was a combination between them, and some malignant powers? They first brought them in among them into the countrey, and then they cast them out, and drove them away again. But there was no ground for such a charge. It was never mentioned. It was impossible to be made. For such cases were well known, and are spoken of by other writers, contemporarie with the Evangelists, by *Josephus*, and others, as common in *Judea*, and elsewhere, not only at that time, but also before, and afterwards, as was observed by us in a preceding discourse.

The

DISC. The Jews had among them methods of
 IV. exorcising spirits, or curing the diseases,
 which they were supposed to inflict: though,
 possibly, with but little success, any farther
 than they were assisted by the art of
 medicine. However, as exorcisms had been
 in use among them, they afford proof, that
 such cases, and the opinion concerning
 them, were known before our Saviour's
 appearance in the world.

2 Obj. It is said, that divers things appear in the historie of these persons, which are very difficult, if not impossible to be accounted for, but upon the supposition of real possessions, or at least the interposition and operation of evil spirits.

(1.) First of all, it may be said: If there was no agence of evil spirits, how came it to pass, that this opinion so prevailed, as it did? and how came it, that many persons thought themselves to be possessed by evil spirits? The man at the tombs, when asked by Jesus, what was his name, answered: *Legion, for we are many.* And divers brought their children, or other friends to Christ, desiring him to have mercie on them, because an evil spirit afflicted, and tormented them.

To which I answer. It is no uncommon thing for opinions to prevail in the world, which have no solid foundation. Disc. IV.

How many have been disposed to ascribe the diseases of the human body, and other disastrous events in the world, to the planets, or other stars ! It was for a long time a very common opinion, that spirits, of inferior orders, in a manner filled the region of the air. And many distempers were ascribed to their influence. When such an opinion prevailed, it was very likely that some, who fell under grievous distempers, should think themselves harassed and tormented by evil spirits, and upon some occasions speak in conformity to their inward apprehensions. This, particularly, was the case of the man, called *Legion*, and perhaps of many others, who were under a deep melancholie.

(2.) It is urged : How came these persons, who are said to have evil spirits, to know Jesus to be the Christ, if they were not under the influence of evil spirits, of great knowledge, as well as much power ? *And there was in their synagogue, [at Capernaum,] a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, saying : Let us alone, what have*

we

DISC. *we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth.*
 IV. *Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee,*
who thou art, the holy one of God. Mark
 i. 23. 24. Compare Luke iv. 33, 34. And
 the two men, in the countrey of the Ga-
 darenis, cried out, saying: *What have we to*
do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God! Art
thou come hither to torment us before the
time? Matt. viii. 29.

To which I beg leave to answer. It
 seems to me, that these persons knew
 Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, in
 the same way, that others did. The ex-
 pectation of the coming of the Messiah
 had been for some while very common,
 and even universal, founded upon just in-
 terpretations of the ancient Prophets, which
 were publicly read in the synagogues, and
 were in the hands of all men. These
 people, before they were seized with the
 disorders, which they now laboured under,
 were well apprized of the common notions
 concerning the greatnesse of the Messiah,
 which were allowed by the Jews in gene-
 ral.

We ought likewise to recollect, that
 none of the miracles, recorded by the
 first three Evangelists, were performed by
 our

our Lord, till after the commencement of his public ministrie, that is, the most public and open part of it. This is evident from St. *John's* Gospel, compared with the rest. The first three Evangelists say but little of our Lord's ministrie, till after *John* was cast into prison. But before that, as St. *John* assures us, he had wrought divers miracles, and had begun to gather disciples. Moreover, some of the miracles, recorded by the first three Evangelists, might be wrought, and some of our Lord's excellent discourses spoken by him, before any of those persons, said to have an unclean spirit, made acknowledgements of our Lord's great character.

The expectation of the Messiah being general, and *John* the Baptist having preached in the most public manner, and declared to all, that the great person, whom they looked for, was at hand, and would soon appear among them, and our Lord begining to speak as no man ever spake before, and doing many great and miraculous works, shewing forth his glorie, and many believing on him, and his fame being very great in *Judea*, and in neighboring places, no man could be altogether

H

ignorant

Disc.
IV.

DISC. ignorant of him. It is therefore not at all
IV. strange, that these diseased persons should
in their way bear testimonie to him. All
those, said to have evil spirits, as we
readily perceive, were not discomposed in
mind. Many of them were epileptical,
or paralytical. These, undoubtedly, en-
joyed, at some seasons, the free use of their
senses and understandings, and might dis-
cern the evidences of our Lord's great
character: and being sincere and honest,
might be disposed to own it, and declare
the sense of their minds. But thinking
their distempers to be owing to the opera-
tion and influence of evil spirits, they affect
to speak in their name.

As for the men in the countrey of the
Gadarens, who were disordered in their
minds, and yet acknowledged Jesus to be
the Christ, the thing may be thought
more difficult. But, as just said, before
they were seized with that distemper, they
were acquainted with the expectation of
the Messiah, and the general apprehen-
sions concerning his character. And be-
fore now they had heard of Jesus. Many
who labor under that indisposition, are
honest, and acute. They have also some
intervals

intervals of ease. Nor are they unreasonable in every respect. But setting aside some particular phansie, can reason and argue consistently enough. It therefore is not impossible, nor improbable, that some laboring under this affliction, having heard of the fame of Jesus, who was much talked of every where, should think, and then be disposed to speak, honorably of him.

Disc.
IV.

3.) The escape of the man, called *Legion*, from his confinement, it is argued, is a proof of the interposition of evil spirits, of more than human power, and not to be otherwise accounted for. For the Evangelist *Mark* says, *that no man could bind him, no not with chains. For he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder, and the fetters broken in pieces. Neither could any man tame him.* Mark v. 3, 4.

But, as seems to me, the escape of such a person from his confinement needs not to be reckoned so very extraordinarie a thing: when it is well known, that persons in the like disorders have at some seasons uncommon strength.

H 2

Moreover,

DISC. Moreover, I apprehend, that many do
 IV. imprudently magnify the security, with
 which that man had been confined. We
 are too apt, inconsiderately, to judge of
 former times by our own. It is likely,
 that great improvements have been made
 in late ages, in the method of treating
 people in that unhappy circumstance.

*Seeher's Sermon before London Hospital: 1754
 p 8-11:*
 Hospitals, for the relief and cure of
 such as labor under this and other grievous
 distempers, may be said to be a Christian
 institution. They owe their original to that
 benevolence, which Christian principles in-
 spire men with toward their fellow creatures.
 In those houses, where there is constant
 attendance, the security must be much
 greater than in other places. Supposing,
 there was for some short season a want of
 attention to this person, the bands with
 which he was fastened, whether of metal
 or cord, with his continual and violent
 motion, would fret, and wear, and then
 break, and burst asunder. And when he
 felt himself at liberty, his melancholic ap-
 prehensions would carry him to the deso-
 late and solitarie place, where our Lord
 found him.

4.) The losse of the swine is reckoned unaccountable, but upon the supposition of a real possession, and the interposition of many evil spirits. Disc. IV.

It may be remembred, that (b) formerly we mentioned three several ways of accounting for that event. One, supposing, that the distraction, which the man had labored under, was transferred by our Lord from him to the swine. Another, that the demons, leaving the man, at Christ's order, did with his permission, take possession of the swine, and hurry them down the precipice: the third, that the lunatic man, or men, drove the swine into the lake.

Several reasons were then offered against the first of those opinions. There remain therefore the other two only to be now considered.

Every one should judge for himself. But to me it appears most probable, that this was done by the man himself, called Legion, either alone, or with the joynt assistance of the other, his companion in affliction. For this miracle, as was observed before, was performed by our Lord

(b) See before, p. 17, 18.

Disc. with great deliberation. Some time passed
IV. between our Lord's signifying his will and
 pleasure, that the evil spirits should depart,
 or that the man should be cured, and his
 perfect recoverie. Some things may be
 reasonably supposed by us, which are not
 inserted in such a relation as this. When
 the people of the neighboring city had
 been informed of the cure of this unhappy
 person, as *St. Mark* assures us, *they came*
to see Jesus, and they see him that was possessed
with a demon, and had the legion, sitting, and
clothed, and in his right mind. Clothing
 therefore had been brought to him. But
 the Evangelist does not say, how it was
 procured: because indeed it is needless, to
 relate particularly what may be easily sup-
 posed.

The distraction, under which this man
 had labored, was very grievous, and outra-
 geous. He was a hideous form, and his
 action was very violent. When he had
 conceived the thought of gratifying the
 evil spirits, by which he imagined himself
 to be possessed, with the destruction of the
 swine, he would without much difficulty
 drive them off the precipice. If some
 few of them were put in motion, the
 whole

whole herd would follow. Nor is it unlikely, that the other person, his companion in affliction, joyned his assistance. For St. *Matthew* speaks of two. They invested the herd then on each side, and thus drove them before them.

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This appears to me a much more reasonable way of accounting for the losse of the swine, than to suppose, that (c) our blessed Lord accepted and granted the petition of evil spirits.

5.) The case of *Marie Magdalen* may create a difficulty in the minds of some. And it may be inquired, what notion we ought to have of it, since it is said, that *out of her went seven demons*? Is not this an evident proof of the reality of possessions? See *Mark* xvi. 9. *Luke* viii. 2.

To which I answer, that many of late times have supposed *Marie Magdalen* to be the woman mentioned by St. *Luke* in the seventh chapter of his Gospel, who is there spoken of as a *sinner*, who, when our Lord was in the house of *Simon* the Pharisee, came to him; and gave proof of repentance. For which reason, *Marie*

(c) See *History* p. 19. and *Note* (b).

H 4

Mag-

DISC. *Magdalen* is often set forth as a remarkable
 IV. example of repentance.

But that opinion, so far as I am able to judge, is entirely without foundation in the Gospels. There is no reason at all to think, that *Marie Magdalen* and that woman are one and the same.

What was *Marie's* case appears in general by St. *Luke's* account, Ch. viii. 1. 2. *He went through every city and village, preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom of heaven. And the twelve were with him, and certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits, and infirmities: Marie, called Magdalen, out of whom went seven demons, and others.* Here *Marie* is reckoned among those, whom our Lord had *healed of infirmities*, and such infirmities, as were ascribed to evil spirits.

But I do not think, we can with certainty conclude from those words, what was her particular affliction: because the Jews in those times imputed a great variety of distempers to the influence of demons. But though we dare not say positively, what was her case, whether a discomposed frame of mind, or epilepsie, or somewhat else; it appears to me very evident,

dent, that some natural, not moral distemper, is thereby intended, and that by *seven demons* is meant many: a certain number being put for an uncertain. It was supposed, as in the case of the man who called himself *Legion*, that more than one demon, or unclean spirit, was concerned in inflicting, or aggravating the infirmity, which she had been afflicted with, and which our blessed Lord graciously removed.

DISC.

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6.) The next thing, which I shall take notice of, is the historie of an affair at *Ephesus*. Acts xix. 10.—17. *And this continued by the space of two years, so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and evil spirits went out of them. Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them that had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying: We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered, and said: Jesus I know, and Paul I know.*

But

DISC. *But who are you? And the man, in whom the*
IV. *evil spirit was, leapt on them, and overcame*
them, and prevailed against them: so that
they fled out of that house naked and wound-
ed. And this was known to all the Jews,
and Greeks also, dwelling at Ephesus. And
fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord
Jesus was magnified.

This historie might afford occasion for many remarks, as that demoniacs were common among Gentils, and in Heathen countreys, as well as among the Jews in Judea: that the Jews practised exorcisms at home and abroad: and that some, who took upon them the office of exorcists, were men of indifferent characters, and were impostors.

But what I allege this passage for, and which we are chiefly to attend to, is the argument, which it affords for real possessions, or the influence of malignant, powerful spirits. For this man speaks, as if he were actuated by some such beings. Moreover he shews great force and activity. He alone overcomes several men at once.

Nevertheless, in my opinion, here is far from being any sufficient evidence of the pre-

presence or power of invisible beings. The Disc. knowledge, which the man shews, is common and ordinarie. St. Paul had before this time wrought many miracles at *Ephe-*
sus, in the name of Jesus, in curing all kinds of diseases. And the man, before us, was convinced of the truth and greatness of divers of the works, which he had either seen, or heard of. IV.

When therefore these Jewish exorcists came to him, and made an attempt to give him relief under the indisposition, with which he was afflicted, and he found no benefit from all their exorcisms; he was enraged, and treats them as hateful deceivers, and says: *Jesus I know, and Paul I know. But who are you?* No evil spirit, under the direction of Satan, the prince of evil spirits, would bear such a testimonie to Jesus and his Apostle. But it is the honest, understanding man, who expresses the sense of his own mind.

Says St. Luke, *And the man, in whom the evil spirit was, that is, in whom there was supposed to be an evil spirit, leapt on them, and overcame them, and prevailed.* Which is not at all hard to conceive, considering his just indignation, and that this assault was unexpected. The

DISC. exorcists were unprovided for defense, and
 IV. at the same time were dispirited by fear
 and shame at the disappointment, which
 they had met with, and the detection of
 their imposture, and the inefficacie of their
 boasted skill.

As St. Luke says, *fear fell on all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.* And very justly, after so many miracles wrought by Paul, and the manifest proof now afforded of the insufficiency of those methods of cure, which were most depended upon.

7.) There is one thing more to be taken notice of by us, before we leave this head. We must go back for it to the xvi. chapter of the Acts. But I have reserved it for this place, it seeming to some one of the strongest proofs in the New Testament, in behalf of real possessions. It was at *Philippi in Macedonia.* Says St. Luke: *And it came to pass, as we went to prayer. It might as well be rendered: As we went to the oratorie, or the Jewish synagogue, a little way out of the city, by the river side. As we went to the oratorie, a certain damsel, possessed with a spirit of divination, met us, which brought her masters great gain by*

Southsaying. The same followed Paul, and us, and cried, saying: These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this she did many days. But Paul being grieved, turned, and said to the spirit: I command thee in the name of Jesus to come out of her. And he came out the same hour. And when her masters saw, that the hope of their gain was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the market-place, unto the rulers. And brought them to the magistrates, saying: These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city. And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. Acts. xvi. 16, 21. And the magistrates being exasperated by the clamour of these men, they ordered Paul and Silas to be beaten, and shut up in prison.

A certain damsel, possessed with a spirit of divination, literally, having a spirit of Python. St. Luke, undoubtedly, makes use of the common Heathen appellation. And the phrase seems to denote, that this woman was supposed to have the same spirit of Python or Apollo, that delivered oracles in the name of Apollo in the Pythian

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Disc. thian temple. In short, by the help of
 IV. this maid-servant, her masters were supposed to be able to deliver out oracles, and to answer all manner of questions, and foretell future events concerning those who consulted them. Hereby her owners had much gain.

And many there are in our time, who still think, this woman had in her a spirit of divination, and that she was able to foretell futurities.

They who are of this opinion, express themselves after this manner. "The (a)
 " ancient *Greeks* and *Romans* possessed
 " slaves of all professions, Philosophers,
 " Rhetoricians, Grammarians, Physicians,
 " as well as persons bred up to every sort
 " of mechanic trade. Among the rest,
 " they sometimes happened to have slaves
 " that were Astrologers, or Magicians, or
 " Diviners. *Εξαρχιμυδοι*, or those who
 " had the spirit of *Python*, were doubt-
 " less very rare, and the purchase of
 " such an one must have been exceeding
 " high. The maid-servant, here men-
 " tioned, is represented as having more
 " than one owner. Her price, it is likely,

(a) *Bisbee upon the Acts*. p. 342. 343.

" was

“was too great to be advanced by a single
 “person. At least no one cared to risk so
 “large a sum upon the uncertainty of a
 “life. For though she brought much
 “gain, how soon might it be cut off by
 “her decease?” It is farther said, “that
 “(e) the reputation of this woman was
 “established. There was a general belief,
 “that she did foretell things, and there
 “was a great concourse of people after her,
 “to make enquiry into their future for-
 “tunes.” So say (f) those persons, who
 are of that opinion.

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Upon which I observe, that unquestion-
 ably here was a sort of oracle. For such
 things were common in Heathen countreys,
 not only carried on by their Priests in the
 temples of their deities, but also by others
 in other places. But as I think, there is
 good reason to believe, that all those oracles

(e) *The same.* p. 296.

(f) “The plain truth therefore is, St. Paul prevented
 her future prophesying. He cast out the spirit, which
 spake within her, so that she was no more heard to speak
 as from her belly or breast. Her masters soon perceived,
 that she was no longer inspired or possessed, that she could
 now utter no more divinations or prophecies: and there-
 fore all hope of their gains from her, whether in *Philippi*,
 or any other city, were wholly gone.” *The same* p. 297.
 298. See also Dr. Fortin’s Remarks upon Ecclesiastical Hi-
 story, Vol. i. p. 123. 124.

DISC. in general were cheats and impostures, the
 IV. effects of human skill and contrivance
 only; so I think, there was a like cheat
 and imposture in this case. But it may not
 be easie to say exactly, wherein the im-
 posture consisted.

It has been supposed, that the woman
 was a slave, and the joynt property of
 several. Which might be. But none of
 those oracles could be carried on with
 credit, without a combination, for getting
 intelligence, and for the sake of other
 transactions at the office. And whether
 she was a slave, or a hired servant, does
 not clearly appear.

I make no question, that the masters
 were artful and deceitful. But, possibly,
 the woman was honest. If she had once
 been otherwise, she was seised with com-
 punction, when she declared *Paul* and his
 companions to be *servants of the most high*
God. But that would not cure her di-
 stemper. For some distemper she had,
 which *Paul* removed.

It seems to me not improbable, that this
 woman laboured under some indisposition,
 possibly, some kind of melancholie, which
 was imputed to the influence of a demon,
 and

mentioned in the New Testament.

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and particularly to *Apollo*, as was common among Heathen people. The masters, pretending that hereby she was qualified to resolve all manner of questions, set up an oracle at *Philippi*, and delivered out answers, as if received from the spirit of *Python*. And their project was carried on very artfully, insomuch that they had a good deal of employment, and many inquirers, and made great gain.

But the maid being honest, or at least well disposed, and hearing of *Paul*; what doctrine he taught, and what works he performed; or perhaps out of curiosity attending at a distance, and making inquiries after him, she was convinced, and then openly declared, that he and his companions were *servants of the most high God*. Or, she might have received information of *Paul* from her masters. For no people were so inquisitive, and so careful to get early intelligence, as the conductors of those * oracles. But the information given her (if she received it from them,) had a different effect from what was intended. However her high character of *Paul* did not throw her masters into despair that we

* *Vid. Luciani Alexander, seu Pseudomantis.*

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can perceive. But she having often followed *Paul*, and he not valuing such a testimonie, and being touched with compassion for the maid, under her melancholic affection, adapting his expressions to the common opinion about her, *said to the spirit: I command thee, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.* And thereupon the woman immediatly became composed, and chearfull. This happy alteration being evident, and public, her masters hope of farther gain by her was ruined.

This appears to me to have been the case. Nor can it be thought, that a spirit of *Python* should publicly say what tended to diminish a regard for himself, and all Heathen deities in general.

But I may not stay to allege at large the proofs, which might be offered, that the Heathen oracles, and such as were said to speak by the spirit of *Python*, were the impostures of artful men, unsupported by invisible beings, of vast knowledge and power, as some have supposed.

I only observe, that what is here advanced is agreeable to the sentiments of the ancient Prophets, who continually re-
present

represent Heathen idols as altogether insignificant, and vain: and did not imagine, that they were inhabited by invisible beings, who could astonish their worshipers with real wonders, and almost rival the true Deity. II. xli. 21.—24. *Produce your cause, saith the Lord. Bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them shew the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the later end of them. Let them shew the accomplishment of any events, conformably to their predictions in time past. Or declare us, now, things to come. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know, ye are gods. Yea do good, or do evil, that we may be dismayed, and behold it together. Behold ye are of nothing, and your works of nought. And an abomination is he, that chooseth you.* Compare II. xl. 18.—20.

JER. x. 3.—5. *For the customs of the people are vain. For one cutteth a tree out of the forest: (the work of the hands of the workman,) with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold, they fasten it with nails and hammers, that it move not. They are upright, as the palm-tree, but speak not. They must needs be born, because they cannot go.*

Disg. Be not afraid of them. For they cannot do evil. Neither is it in them to do good.

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Is. xlv. 9. They that make a graven image, are all of them vanity. 10. Who has formed a god, or molten a graven image, that is profitable for nothing? 12. The smith with the tongs both worketh in the coals, and fashioneth it with hammers, and what follows to the end of ver. 17. He burneth part thereof in the fire. With part thereof, he eateth flesh, he roasteth roast, and is satisfied. And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image. He falleth down to it, and prayeth unto it, and saith: Deliver me, for thou art my god.

Pf. cxv. 3.—8. But our God is in the heavens. He has done whatsoever he pleased. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of mens hands. They have mouths, but they speak not. Eyes have they, but they see not. They have ears, but they hear not. They have hands, but they handle not. They have feet, but they walk not. Neither speak they through their throat. They have not the faculty of speech. They that make them, are like unto them. So is every one, that trusteth in them. **Comp.** **Pf.** cxxxv. 15—18.

Pf. xcvi. 7. Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols.

Dan.

mentioned in the New Testament.

f17

Dan. v. 4. *They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brasse, of iron, of wood, and of stone, ver. 23. And thou hast praised the gods of silver and gold, of brasse, iron, wood, stone, which see not, nor bear, nor know. And the God, in whom thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not known.*

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Habakkuk ii. 18. 19. *What profiteth the graven image, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make him dumb idols? Woe unto him that saith to the wood: Awake: to the dumb stone: Arise, it shall teach. It is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it.*

Justly therefore does the Prophet say, *the stock is a doctrine of vanities.* Jer. x. 8. Comp. Jer. ii. 27. and Is. xlv. 19. And I refer to the sixth chapter of the apocrypal book of Baruch.

Acts xvii. 29. *We ought not to think, that the Godhead is like unto gold, and silver, or stone graven by art, and man's device.* So says St. Paul, preaching at Athens. He does not flatter them. He plainly intimates, that their consecrated images consisted only of earthly materials, polished by the hand of the artificer.

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1 Cor. viii. 4. *We know, that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.* ch. x. 19. *What say I then? that the idol is any thing?* ch. xii. 2. *Ye know, that ye were Gentils, carried away unto these dumb idols, as ye were led.*

1 Theff. i. 9. *and how ye turned to God from idols, meaning lifeless idols, to serve the living and true God.*

After all this, can any Christians believe, that Heathen idols had either power, or knowledge?

Can we think, that by invocation, and consecration, æreal, invifible beings were brought to reside in images of hollow brasse, or solid marble? And that they thence delivered answers to such as sought to them? Such (g) was indeed, the per-

(g) Sed erras, inquit, & laboris. Nam neque nos æra neque auri argentique materias, neque alias quibus signa consuevit, eas esse per se deos, & religiosa decernimus numina: sed eos in his colimus, eosque veneramur, quos dedicatio infert sacra, et fabrilibus efficit inhabitare simulachris. *Arnob. l. 6. p. 203. in. Vid. ib. p. 207. in.*

Ἐπειτα δὲ καὶ ἰδωμένους τις ἐν φιλοσόφῳ σχήματι συνῶν αὐτοῖς, καὶ ψεύδων χρῆται μὴ ἀμελεῖν τῶν πατέρων—καταπορεύων δὲ τῶν ἑσάντων, ἀδωμῆστας ἔρῃ, συνιέντων, μὴ ἐξιστάσθαι τῇ θρησκείᾳ, ὅταν φανερὸν καὶ ἰδωλῶματα λέγῃ εἶναι τὰ ἀγάλματα, καὶ διὰ τὸ αὐτοῖς ἀφανισμὸν ἰσχυρῶς δύναμιν δὲ τινος ἰσχυρῶς αὐτοῖς, καὶ οὕτως ἀποσπῆναι. *Socrom. H. E. l. 7. p. 724. C. Vid. et Clementin. Hom. X. scd. xxi.*

suasion

suaſion of Heathen people. But it was a mere deluſion appertaining to their ſuperſtition. For which they were derided by the primitive Chriſtians, and the ancient (b) Apologiſts. Who are juſtified by the Scriptures, as we have lately ſeen.

Can we imagine, that Heathen deities were able to do great things for thoſe who fought to them, and recompenſe them for all their coſtly oblations and ſacrifices? I ſay, can any Chriſtians admit ſuch an imagination, when the Prophets repreſent them as things of naught, ſenſleſs idols, who could not ſee, hear, ſpeak, or walk, as graven or molten images, as mere ſtocks, that could do neither good nor evil? Do we not all know, how the

(b) Simulachra iſta, quae vos terrent, quaeque in templis omnibus proſtrati, atque humiles adoratis, oſſa, lapides, aera ſunt, argentum, aurum, lignum ſumptum ex arbore, aut commixtum glutinum gypſo, &c. O utinam liceret in ſimulachri alicujus medias introire pendigines! Immo utinam liceret Olympiacos illos, et Capitolinos Joves in membra reſolutos, omneſque illas partes, quibus ſumma concluditur corporum, diſcretas et ſingulas intueri. &c. *Arnob. l. 6. p. 200, 201. et ſeqq.*

Quisquamne igitur tam ineptus eſt, ut putet aliquid eſſe in ſimulachro Dei, in quo ne hominis quidem quicquam eſt praeter umbram.—Adorant ergo inſenſibilia, qui ſentiunt: irrationabilia, qui ſapiunt: exanima, qui vivunt: terrena, qui oriuntur e coelo. *Lact. l. 2. cap. 2. p. 147.*

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Prophet *Elijah* exposed the inability of *Baal*, in the presence of his numerous priests and worshipers? And shall any Christians still suppose, that *Baal* was a being of mighty power? No, no, *Saturn*, or *Baal*, or *Belus*, or by whatever other name he was invoked, to whom so many fine children were offered in sacrifice by that warlike people the *Carthaginians*, and their ancestors (*i*) the *Phenicians*, was so far from holding the balance of power in that, or any other part of the world, or being able to give victorie to what people he pleased, that he was not able to raise or lay a storm, could not form or blast one spire of grasse, or flower of the field, but was (*k*) a dead man, and, as to power and influence, mere nothing.

When we speak of Heathen deities, as dead men, we are countenanced by many wise men (*l*) among the ancients, and by the

(*i*) Κεῖναι μὲν γὰρ πολλὰς καὶ ἱερὰς ἱδρύας τὰ ἁγία καὶ ἰεροῦ τῶν τέκνων. Euseb. de Laudib. Constant. p. 646. A. Vid. Hieron. Columna ad Fragmenta Ennii. p. 74—76.

(*k*) Saturnum enim principem hujus generis et examinis omnes scriptores vetustatis, Graeci Romanique, hominem prodiderunt, Minuc. Fel. cap. 22.

(*l*) Quibus ex rebus cum constet illos homines fuisse, non est obscurum, quâ ratione dii coeperint nominari. Hac scilicet

the Scriptures, as was shewn (m) before.

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And do we think, that (n) their fond and sorrowful survivors could by any methods and solemnities of deification, performed on this earth, seat them in heaven, and advance them to extensive power and empire?

Some learned men among Christians have supposed, that the young woman at *Philippi*, whose case we have had under our consideration, who is said to have had a *spirit of divination*, had extraordinarie

scilicet ratione Romani Caesares suos consecraverunt, et Mauri reges suos. *Laſant. l. 1. cap. 15.*

et ideo simulachra constituunt. Quae quia mortuorum sunt imagines, similia mortuis sunt. Omni enim sensu carent. *Id. l. 2. cap. 2. p. 146.*

Si vero scrutari vetera, et ex his ea, quae scriptores Graeciae prodiderunt, eruere coner: ipsi illi majorum gentium dii qui habentur, hinc a nobis profecti in coelum reperientur. *Cic. Tuscul. Disp. i. c. 13. Et Conf. Laſ. l. 1. c. 15. p. 85.*

Vid. Euseb. de vita Constant. l. 2. cap. 16. l. 3. cap. 26. et 54. et passim. Vid. Dem. Evang. l. 8. p. 364. Clementin. Hom. 6. n. xxi. xxii. p. 669. 670.

(m) See here p. 49. 50.

(n) Ignosci moerentibus potest, credentibus non potest. Quis enim tam demens, qui consensu, et placito innumera-bilium stultorum, aperiri coelum mortuis arbitretur? aut aliquem, quod ipse non habeat, dare alteri posse. *Laſ. l. i. cap. 15. p. 86.*

knowledge.

DISC. knowledge. They say, that *she prophesied*, that *she could discover lost goods, and reveal what happened in distant places, and do many other things of a like nature.* But their opinion is confuted by the text in Isa. viii. 19. before quoted. For she was one of those, who are particularly mentioned by the Prophet, as having a *familiar spirit*, or spirit of Python, and *muttering*, that is, speaking as out of the belly or breast. And so the place was understood of old by (e) *Jerome*.

3 Obj. The third objection, to be considered by us, is, that the Evangelists seem to have believed real possessions, and to have thought, that divers of the afflicted persons, whose cures they relate, had evil spirits.

To which I answer, that I think this cannot be denied, and that it needs not to be contested. Nor ought this to be thought strange, even supposing, that there was no agency or interposition of evil spirits. For the opinion of possessions being common

(e) Si dixerint, inquit, patres vestri, quos reliquistis: Quærite ventriloquos, quos Pythonas intelligimus. Qualem et in Actibus Apostolorum ancillam legimus, quæ quaestui erat dominis suis. *Hieron. Comm. in Is. cap. viii. Tom. 3. p. 81.*

at that time, and generally admitted by the knowing, as well as by others, it is no wonder, that the Evangelists should be of the same sentiment. The twelve Apostles of Christ were unlearned men. Our Lord chose to have such for Apostles. And he did not teach them philosophic, but religion. And indeed, if the Evangelists had appeared to know more than others in this and other points of a philosophical nature, it might have diminished the credibility of their historie. If they had been wiser and more knowing than most others, and even than the knowing and learned of that time; some would have been apt to charge them with art and contrivance in the main parts of their historie. But now there is no room for such a charge, or suspicion.

4 Obj. The fourth and last objection is, that our blessed Lord, if he did not countenance the common and prevailing opinion upon this head, does not appear to have opposed, or discouraged it. Which, as we may think, he would have done, if it was not right. For it might have been an useful work, and a benefit to mankind,
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to deliver them from wrong apprehensions upon this point.

To which I answer. Undoubtedly, our blessed Lord knew the truth of the case. For he knew all things. But it does not follow, that he was therefore obliged to speak his mind, or to correct every false and mistaken notion among the people, whom he taught. Our (*p*) Lord was concerned in the most important design, teaching the principles of true religion, and recommending them by works of mighty power, and great goodnesse. When any afflictive cases were brought to him, it was sufficient to heal them, to whatever cause they were ascribed. It was expedient, not to enter into any debate upon that head. It might have diverted him from his main work.

We do not observe in the Old Testament, that it was customarie for any Prophet, to instruct men in the things of na-

(*p*) D'ailleurs, N. S. n'étoit pas appelé à corriger les fausses idées que les Juifs pouvoient avoir sur la nature de ces maladies. Et s'il leur avoit dit, qu'elles étoient l'effet de quelques causes naturelles, ils en auroient pris un prétexte de l'accuser de nier qu'il y eût de mauvais esprits : et par conséquent qu'il y en eût aussi de bons. Les Pharisiens en auroient fait un Sadducéen. *Beauf. Remarques sur le N. T. p. 14.*

ture,

ture. The people of the Jews, in the time of our Saviour, were generally free from idolatrie. And as they considered the spirits, which they supposed sometimes to inflict distempers on men, to be *evil and unclean*, there was no danger of their honoring and worshiping them. There was therefore no urgent necessity, that he should interpose for correcting any misapprehensions concerning the causes of some indispositions and distempers.

That our Lord studiously declined to concern himself with things foreign to the office of a Prophet, or extraordinarie messenger from heaven, may appear from two particular instances.

One is at the begining of the ninth chapter of St. *John's* Gospel. *And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying: Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered: Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.* Here the disciples give the Lord a fair occasion to say something about the philosophical notion of the pre-existence of the human soul. But
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our Lord declines that point, and only says, that the blindness of this man was not owing to any sin of his own, or his parents.

The other instance is in Luke xii. 13, 14. *And one of the companie said unto him: Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him: Man, who made me a judge and a divider over you? And he said unto them: Take heed, and beware of covetousnesse, and what follows.* Here one comes to our Lord with a petition. And it may be thought to be very reasonable. For it cannot but be a good work, to decide a cause truly, and with a just sentence, and to reconcile brethren. Nevertheless our Lord absolutely rejects the proposal, as improper to be hearkened to by him. His work was to teach religion, to mortify earthly affections, to deliver men from covetousnesse, and to raise mens thoughts to things above. For such ends as these, he embraced the present, and all other occasions. But to interpose in particular differences among men, was not his province.

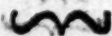
I take this to be a sufficient answer to the difficulty under consideration.

But

But then here ariseth an objection against all that has been said in this, and the two preceding discourses. For it may be said: If Christ confined his doctrine to the important truths and duties of religion, should not a preacher of the gospel do the same, and decline every thing not expressly taught by Christ, or his Apostles?

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To which I answer, that in the course of this argument I have intimated over and over, that no particular sentiment, concerning this point, ought to be reckoned an article of religion. It is left undetermined by Christ and his Apostles. And men may think of it, as they find best, if they do but take care to maintain the supremaeie of the divine government, and guard against undue fears and apprehensions of evil spirits. And having inculcated such observations and cautions as these, I hope, no harm has been done in setting before you the different sentiments of learned, and judicious, and pious interpreters of scripture, concerning the case of those, who in the New Testament are spoken of, as having evil spirits.

And having now finished the argument, I again declare, (what no one can doubt the

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the truth of,) that it is more satisfactorie to promote good works among men, than to bring them over to any particular opinion. There is more pleasure in advancing the happinesse of others, than in raising a man's own reputation for skill in any branch of science. Humility is better than knowledge. A right disposition of the heart is more valuable, than right sentiments. At the same time it is a reasonable ambition, to promote both knowledge and piety. The character of Christians then becomes compleat. A love of truth, a thirst after knowledge, an inquisitive temper, seem to be inseparable concomitants of integrity. Such dispositions therefore may be fitly cherished and encouraged. Solomon says, that *wisdom excelleth follie, as far as light excelleth darknesse.* Ecc. ii. 13. *That the soul be without knowledge, it is not good.* Prov. xix. 2. *The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.* xviii. 15. I therefore take the liberty to conclude with that exhortation to you, which St. Paul gave to the Christians at Corinth: *Brethren, be not children in understanding. Howbeit, in malice be ye children. But in understanding be ye men.* 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

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A P P E N D I X,

*For farther illustrating the
Subject.*

- I. *Two Passages of Josephus concerning Demoniacs, with Remarks.* II. *Divers Texts of the N. T. relating to Demoniacs, explained.* 1. *Matt. xii. 27. 28.* 2. *Matt. xii. 43—45.* 3. *Matt. xvii. 21.* 4. *Luke x. 17. 18.* 5. *Texts, where demons are said to be rebuked by our Lord.* III. *A remarkable Explication of Acts vi. 9.*

- I. **J**OSEPHUS, having described the castle of Machaerus, or Machaeruns, says: "On (a) the north side of the city is a valley, in which is a place called Baaras. It bears a plant of the

*Passages of
Josephus.*

(a) *De B. Jud. l. 7. cap. 25. al. vi.*

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" same

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" same name. It is of a flaming colour,
 " and toward evening it shines very bright.
 " It is not easie to be taken by those who
 " would gather it. For it withdraws it-
 " self, and does not stay, unless one pours
 " upon it the urine of a woman, or men-
 " struous blood. And even then it is
 " certain death to him who takes it, un-
 " less he carries the root hanging down
 " upon the hand. There is another way
 " of getting this plant without danger.
 " It is this. They dig all round it, so
 " that a very small bit only of the root is
 " left in the ground. Then they tye a
 " dog to it. And he attempting to follow
 " him that tied him, the root is easily
 " pulled up. But the dog dies presently,
 " as it were in the stead of him, who
 " would get the plant. Afterwards there
 " is no danger to those who touch it.
 " With all these dangers the root is very
 " desirable for the sake of one virtue.
 " For demons (*b*), as they are called, who
 " are the spirits of wicked men, entering
 " into the living, and killing those who
 " have

(*b*) Τα γὰρ καλέμενα δαιμόνια, ταῦτα δι' ποτηρῶν ἰσὺ
 ἀνθρώπων πνύματα, τοῖς ζῶσι εἰσδυόμενα, καὶ κείροντα
 τῆς βοηθείας μὴ τυγχάνουσαι, αὐτὴ ταχίως ἐξελάναι,
 καὶ προσπιχθῆναι μόνοι τοῖς νοσήσι. *Ibid.*

" have no help, this root presently ex-
 " pells, if it be only brought near to those
 " who are diseased?

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It is astonishing, that any man in repute for good sense, should be able to write in this manner. Surely there never was in any part of the world a plant with all these properties.

That passage is taken from the historie of the Jewish war. There is another passage in his Jewish Antiquities, in the historie of Solomon.

In the former part of the paragraph is the substance of what is said of Solomon's great wisdom, in 1 Kings iv. 29--33. After which it follows: " God (c) also gave him
 " understanding to attain to skill against

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" demons

(c) Παρίσχει δὲ αὐτῷ μαθηὶ ὁ θεὸς, καὶ τὴν κατὰ τῶν δαιμόνων τέχνην εἰς ἀφίλειαν καὶ θεραπείαν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. ἑπωδάς τε συνταξάμενος, αἷς παρηγορεῖται τὰ νοσήματα, καὶ τρόπος ἐξορκώσων κατέλιπεν, οὗς ἑδόμενα τὰ δαιμόνια ὡς μηχανὴ ἱκανοῦν ἐκδιώκων. Καὶ αὕτη μέχρι νῦν παρ' ἡμῶν ἡ θεραπεία πλεῖστον ἰσχύει. Ἰστέον γὰρ τινα ἰδιάζων τῶν ὁμοφύλων, οὐσιπασίαν παρῶν ——— πλεῖστον ὑπὸ τῶν δαιμόνων λαμβανόμενος ἀπολύει τῶν. Ὁ δὲ τῆς θεραπείας τρόπος τοιοῦτος ἦν. Προσφίρων ταῖς ῥῖσι δαιμονιζόμενον τὸν δακτύλου, ἔχοντα ὑπὸ τῇ σφραγίδι ῥῖσαν ἐξ ᾧ ἐπιδίδει σολομών, ἑπιπτα ἐξήλκεν ὁσφραινομένην διὰ μυλίων τὸ δαιμόνιον. Καὶ πιστῶς εὐθὺς τῷ αἰσώπῳ, μηχανὴ εἰς αὐτὸν ἱκανοῦν ἔρχετο, σολομώντες

APP. " demons for the benefit of mankind.
 " For having composed incantations,
 " whereby diseases are removed, he also
 " left behind him certain kinds of ex-
 " orcisms, whereby demons may be ex-
 " pelled, so as never to return again. And
 " this method of cure is effectual [or pre-
 " vails much] among us to this day. For
 " I saw one *Eleazar*, my countryman, in
 " the presence of *Vespasian*, and his sons,
 " and many tribunes, and other soldiers,
 " deliver men who were seized by these
 " demons. The cure was in this man-
 " ner. Applying to the nostrils of the
 " demoniac a ring, having under the
 " seal one of those roots, of which
 " *Solomon* taught the virtues, he drew out
 " the demon at the nostrils of the man
 " that smelled to it. The man presently
 " falling down, he mentioned *Solomon*, and
 " reciting the charms composed by him,
 " he adjured the demon never to return
 " any more. Moreover *Eleazar* being de-

λομῶς τι μεμημένῳ, καὶ τὰς ἰσυχὰς αἷς συνίθκειν
 ἐκείνῳ, ἐπιλέγων. Βεβόμην δὲ πείσαι καὶ παραγεῆσαι
 τοῦ παρατυγχάνουσιν· ὁ ἱλαΐζαρ, ὅτι ταύτην ἔχει ἰσχυρὴν,
 ἐτίθει μικρὸν ἔμπροσθεν ἤτοι πολήριον· πολλὰς ὑδατῶν, ἢ
 ποδόνπλεον καὶ τῷ δαιμονίῳ προσίτατιν ἐξίόντι τῷ ἀνθρώ-
 πῳ ταύτ' αἰατρίψαι, καὶ παρὰσχῆν ἐπιβῆναι τοῖς ὀρεῶσιν,
 ὅτι καταλάοιπαι τὸν ἄνθρωπον. κ. λ. *Antiq. l. 8. cap. ii.*
sect. 5.

" fious

“ firsous to fatisfy all the company, that he
“ had that power, he placed a little way
“ off a cup full of water, or a small
“ vefsel, in which the feet are washed.
“ Then he commanded the demon, as he
“ went out of the man, to overthrow
“ them, that all present might be sensible
“ he had left the man. This being done,
“ the wisdom of *Solomon* was made mani-
“ fest.”

We are now to make remarks upon these two passages.

1. We hence evidently perceive, that *Josephus* believed, there were real demons, or persons, into whom demons entered, and to whom they were troublesome.

2. Therefore this must have been a common opinion at that time, as we perceive in the Gospels.

3. The demons, who entered into men, and took possession of them, according to his account, were the spirits or souls of wicked men. And it may be also hence concluded, that this was the opinion of many other Jews at that time.

And by the way, I would observe, that we have here full proof, that the Phari-

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sees, of which sect *Josephus* was, believed the separate existence of souls after death. This was shewn (*d*) formerly from several passages in his works, where he speaks of the souls of good and bad men, and says, "That (*e*) according to the doctrine of the " Sadducees souls perish with the bodies." But he and the rest of the Pharisees believed the continuance or subsistence of souls after death. I think, we are hereby led to the true and certain interpretation of Acts xxiii. 8. For (*f*) the Sadducees say, that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit. But the Pharisees confess both. Where by spirit must be meant the human soul, subsisting separate from the body.

4. We farther learn from *Josephus*, that incantations and exorcisms were practised by Jews in his time, for expelling demons out of the bodies of men, of which they were supposed to have taken possession.

(*d*) See *Credibility. Part i. B. i. ch. iv.*

(*e*) Σαδδουκαίοις δὲ τὰς ψυχὰς ὁ λόγος συναφανίζῃ τοῖς σώματι. *Ant. lib. 18. cap. i. sect. 4.*

(*f*) Deum esse credebant, sed praeter eum nihil quod non sensibus perciperetur, non angelos, non superesse corporibus animas, ideoque nec fore resurrectionem. *Grut. in Act. xxiii. 8. Vid. et Wolf. in eundem locum.*

5. The

5. The storie told by *Josephus* of *Eleazar* lyes open to many exceptions, and appears ridiculous. For what reason can there be to think, that demons, whether they be bad angels, or the souls of bad men, should be affected by the smell of a root? It is likely, that *Eleazar* was an impostor, and the whole affair related by *Josephus*, as transacted before *Vespasian*, and his Court, was artifice and delusion. There was a compact between *Eleazar* and the pretended demoniac. *Josephus* has not mentioned the symptoms of any distemper, under which the man labored. If the man had been afflicted with some grievous disorder, the removal of it would have been sufficient proof of the power of *Eleazar*, and of the virtues of *Solomon's* incantations, without overturning a small vessel of water, placed near the exorcist, or his demoniac. How that was done, I do not know. But I suppose, our flight-of-hand gentlemen can easily account for such a feat, and gratify spectators with others more surprising.

6. It may be hence argued, that the Jewish exorcists, with all their incantations, were of very little service to mankind, for relieving them under any indisposition,

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How ineffectual the exorcisms of the sons of *Sceva*, a Jewish Priest, were at *Ephesus*, we have seen in the historie, related in Acts xix. 13.—17. Nor does it appear, that *Eleazar*, of whom *Josephus* writes, performed any cure, or expelled any demon: but it was mere artifice, as just shewn.

7. From these two passages we may be fully satisfied, that *Josephus* was not a Christian. And it may be also argued with great probability, that the passage concerning Jesus, in the 18. book of his Antiquities, is not genuine, but is an interpolation.

8. Must it not appear very remarkable, that *Josephus*, shunning the affairs of Christians, and omitting the great works of our Lord and his Apostles, has not been able to relate one credible storie of a miracle, excepting those of the Old Testament? *Josephus* is willing enough to relate miracles, and extraordinarie things, or such things as have an appearance of being so. But they will not bear examination. How came this to pass, that *Josephus*, a Pharisee, a learned man, of the race of the Priests, should fall so far below our honest, artless Evangelists? In their histo-
ries


ries we see simplicity and dignity. The reason is, because they are truth. They copy a real original. They write the historie of the great Prophet that was to come, the Messiah. Who cures diseases of all kinds, and raises the dead with his word, without parade and ostentation. But the learned *Josephus*, the Priest, the Statesman, *Josephus*, when he attempts to relate a miracle, for the honour of his countrey, even the dispossessing a demon, produceth nothing extraordinarie, but the overturning a small tottering vessel full of water, and says, that the demon came out at the man's nose!

And can any man, who reads the above cited passages, think it any disparagement to the Christian Religion, that it was not embraced by *Josephus*, who has given such proofs of want of judgement, and had not just notions in things of religion? For he could not conceive, that (g) intentions, without the act, were liable to punishment.

II. 1. Matt. xii. 27. *And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your chil-*

(g) Τὸ γὰρ μὴκέτι ποιῆσαι τὸ ἔργον βαλυσάμων, ἐκ ἔστι τιμωρίας ἀξίον. *Antiq. l. 12. cap. ix. 1.*

dren

APP.  dren cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. 28. But if I cast out demons by the spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Compare Luke xi. 19. 20.

Josephus has assured us, that the Jews practised exorcisms for expelling demons: and has informed us of one method of performing them. Divers ancient Christian writers, *Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen*, and others, (whose passages may be seen in *Grotius* and *Whitby* upon this text of *St. Matthew*;) do also speak of Jewish exorcisms, and suppose, that they adjured demons in the name of the God of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*. To these (b) exorcists, it is likely, our Lord refers, and not to his own disciples, or any others, who had a respect for him, like the person mentioned *Mark ix. 38.*—*40,* and *Luke ix. 49. 50.*

What our Lord says, is to this effect: "If I, as you say, by *Beelzebub* cast out demons; by whom do your country-

(b) *Filii vestri*. Non Apostoli, qui a Phariseis una cum Christo accusabantur, sed populares Phariseorum, et discipuli. *Grot. ad Matt. xii. 27.* See also *Whitby* upon the place.

men and disciples cast them out, or attempt to do so? You do not impute to them a combination with Satan. But you approve of them. From their practises therefore, mean and contemptible as they are, may be formed an argument, sufficient to shew the injustice, and the malignity of your censure passed upon me. For if I cast out demons, and by a word instantly cure all manner of diseases usually ascribed to those evil spirits, and all their worst symptoms, as you see me to do daily: you cannot but know, it is owing to an immediate exertion of the power of God, and you might conclude, that his kingdom by the Messiah is now setting up among you."

Our Lord does not here ascribe any virtue to the Jewish exorcisms. He rather supposes them ineffectual and insignificant. And tells the Pharisees, they could not but know, that the great works done by him were full proof of his authority, and mission, and of the most extraordinary divine manifestation among them.

2: Our Lord, reproving the hypocrisie of the Pharisees, and the prevailing unbelief of the Jewish people, and apprizing them

Matt. xii.
43—45.

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them of the imminent danger they were in of falling under the heaue judgements of God, says: *When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return unto my house, whence I came out. And when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with him seven other spirits, more wicked than himself. And they enter in, and dwell there. And the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it be also unto this wicked generation.* Matt. xii. 43.—45. The same is recorded also Luke xi. 24.—26.

This discourse of our Lord is a comparison, wherein he represents the state of the Jewish people, by way of allusion to those distempers, which they ascribed to evil spirits.

When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. The Jewish people, in the later times of their commonwealth, had a notion, that demons did often frequent desert places. In Is. xiii. 21. representing the desolation of Babylon, it is said: *Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there,*
and

mentioned in the New Testament.

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and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall danse there. Instead of satyrs, which is our translation, the Greek version of the seventy puts demons. Καὶ δαίμονες ἐκεί οὐρήσονται. The same language is adopted in the description of the ruin of the anti-christian Babylon, in Rev. xviii. 2. *Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of demons, and the bold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and bateful bird.* κατοικητήριον δαιμόνων.

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In our Lord's comparison, which we are considering, it is supposed, that evil spirits might leave a man for a while, and afterwards return. This also must have been a very common opinion of the Jews. Therefore *Josephus* observes in the historie before transcribed, of *Eleazar's* dispossessing a demon, *that reciting the charms composed by Solomon, he adjured the demon never to return any more.* This opinion, as may be well supposed, was the reason, why the demoniac in the countrey of the *Gadarens* entreated our Lord to permit him to accompany him: thinking, it is likely, that to be the only security against the return of the evil spirits, with which he had been vexed,

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vexed, as he imagined. *When he was entered into the ship, he that had been possessed with demons, prayed, that he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not.* Mark v. 18. 19. Comp. Luke viii. 38. And our Lord also, in his great goodnesse, to prevent troublesome fears, and disquieting apprehensions, when he cured the young man of the epilepsie, which had been ascribed to an evil spirit, as the Evangelist assures us, *rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him: thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.* Mark ix. 25.

Once more, it is supposed in this comparison, that if a demon returned to a man, and took possession of him again, after having left him for a while, the state of that man would be very unhappy. And it is very reasonable to think, that if a person had been relieved under any distemper, which was ascribed to evil spirits, and he was again seized with it, the symptoms would be more violent, and the man's case be very deplorable, and even desperate.

The Jewish people had been severely chastised by the Babylonish captivity, and

a partial reformation had been obtained. They now enjoyed much peace in their own land, and they had the liberty of worship at the temple. They had lately been under the searching ministrie of *John the Baptist*, calling them to repentance, and telling them, that *the axe was laid to the root of the tree. He was a burning and shining light. And for a season they rejoiced in his light.* They now enjoyed the excellent instructions of Jesus, who also wrought among them works, which no Prophet had done before, fully proving his high commission. And *many heard him gladly. They said, never man spake like him: John did no miracles: but all things that John spake of this man were true: many people believed on him, and said: When the Messias comes, will he do more miracles, than these, which this man has done?* If after all, this people should generally admit, and indulge within themselves, the worst passions, and should be guilty of the worst crimes, and grow more and more hardened in wickednesse: they would bring down upon themselves, by the righteous judgement of God, heavier calamities, than ever had befallen them in former times.

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That is what our Lord declares in the figurative expressions of this comparison. Every one will be led to recollect here what St. *Peter* says 1 ep. ii. 20—22. And I refer to the commentators, especially *Grotius*, upon the place, which we have been now considering.

Matt. xvii.
21.

3. Matth. xvii. 21. *Howbeit this kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting.* Mark ix. 29. *And he said unto them: This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.*

The occasion of these words is well known. Whilst our Saviour was in the mount with three of his disciples, *Peter*, and *James*, and *John*, the sons of *Zebedee*; a man brought to the rest of the disciples his son, who was *lunatic*, and *sore vexed*, with an epileptic disorder, ascribed to an evil spirit. But they could not cure him. When the father told this to our Lord, he reproved their want of faith. See Matt. xviii. 16. 17. Mark ix. 18. 19. Luke ix. 40. 41. When the young man had been healed, and the companie was withdrawn; the disciples came to *Jesus* apart, and said: *Why could we not cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, because of your unbelief. For* verily

verily I say unto you : If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove. And nothing shall be impossible to you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting. Matt. xvii. 19. 21.

A faith of miracles may be defined after this (i) manner. "It was a firm, and well-grounded persuasion of mind, enabling men to set about a miraculous operation, in full assurance of God's assisting them." Our Lord told his disciples, that (k) their not being able to cure this young man was owing to the defect of faith, and he reproves them for it. At the same time he teaches them, how they might obtain an encrease of faith, so as to be able to perform the greatest miracles. The method prescribed by him for that end is humble

(i) Compare Dr. Benson's *Reasonableness of the Christian Religion*. p. 6. 7.

(k) Supra dixerat Christus, fiduciâ opus esse ad hæc præsertim notae majoris miracula. Nunc ostendit, quomodo ea parari possit, precibus nimirum fervidis, Jejunium ideo adjungit, quia ad preces inprimis requiritur animus demissus, cui rei inservit jejunium. Unde plerumque conjungi videmus jejunium et orationem. Luc. ii. 37. Act. x. 30, &c. Grot. ad Matt. xvii. 21.

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The defect of faith was blamable in the disciples. For our Lord had *given them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease.* Matt. x. 1. And unquestionably they had before now wrought many miracles. This they must have done, when sent forth by Jesus, during the time of his abode on this earth. St. Mark says ch. vi. 12. 13. *And they went out, and preached, that men should repent. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oyl many that were sick, and healed them.* Our Lord gave like powers afterwards to seventy other disciples. Luke x. begining, *And they returned again with joy, saying: Lord, even the demons are subject to us through thy name.*

But though the disciples had performed some miracles, their faith was not sufficient for the cure of this young man, whose distemper

distemper was obstinate and inveterate, and the symptoms very violent.

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This historie may be illustrated by another instance of defect of faith in the disciples. When they met with a great storm, as they were crossing over the sea of Galilee, with our Lord in the ship, they were exceedingly affrighted, and came to him, saying: *Lord, save us, we perish.* Matt. viii. 24—26. Mar. iv. 37—39. Luke viii.

22—25. Says an ingenious (1) writer :

“ According to the Harmonie of the four

“ Gospels, there are above twenty places,

“ where Jesus is said to have worked mi-

“ racles before this. And therefore the

“ disciples, who had been eye-witnesses of

“ most of those miracles, had just reason to

“ think, that he was able to deliver them

“ in the greatest danger: and that they, es-

“ pecially in his presence, were under the

“ peculiar inspection and care of God.”

Consequently, our Lord justly reprov-

ed them at that season, saying: *Why are ye*

fearful, o ye of little faith?

The greatnesse of the danger, which

they were then in, too much alarmed

(1) Dr. Benson's Reasonableness of the Christian Religion, p. 209. 210.



their fears. And the violence of the symptoms of the young man's distemper too much discouraged them. For which they were justly reprov'd. Nevertheless, our blessed Lord, ever mild and compassionate, makes allowance for their prejudices, and want of consideration. And encourageth them to hope, that they should obtain an increase of faith, and be able to discharge the service, to which he had appointed them, in an honourable manner.

We may here fitly recollect a prayer of the Apostles, and the answer vouchsafed: Acts iv. 23—31. *And now Lord, behold their threatenings. And grant unto thy servants, that with all boldnesse they may speak thy word: and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child, [rather son, or servant,] Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken, where they were assembled together. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. And they spoke the word with boldnesse.* That is, there was a fresh effusion upon them of knowledge, power, and comfort. Whereby they were assured of their being enabled to do every thing needful to confirm the truth of Christ's resurrection. Accordingly it is said there at

ver.

ver. 33. *And with great power gave the Apostles witnesse of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.*

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4. Luke x. 17. 18. *And the seventy returned with joy, saying: Lord, even the demons are subject to us through thy name. And he said unto them: I beheld Satan, as lightening fall from heaven.*

Luke x.
17. 18.

Those words cannot be taken literally. For by *heaven* understand the supreme heaven, the place of the blessed: and it is allowed by all, that Satan, with his angels, was long before driven thence, and could have no access there. Nor can it be hereby intended, that Christ saw Satan fall like lightening from the upper region of the air. For that is a thing of no moment. The words therefore figuratively represent the speedie overthrow of error, falshood, idolatrie, and sin, by the preaching of the gospel, accompanied with mighty signs and wonders, done by the Apostles, and others, in the name of Jesus Christ.

5. Our blessed Lord is sometimes said in the Gospels, to have *rebuked* demons. Those places shall be here taken notice of.

Demons rebuked.

Mark i. 23—26. *And there was in their synagogue [at Capernaum] a man with an*

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an unclean spirit. And he cried out, saying, Let us alone. What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, the holy one of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying: Hold thy peace, and come out of him. The same miracle is related, and in the same manner, by St. Luke, ch. iv. 33—35.

In the historie of the cure of the young man, who had the epilepsie, which was ascribed to the influence of an evil spirit, it is said: *And Jesus rebuked the demon, and he departed out of him. And the child was cured from that hour.* Matt. xvii. 18. *When Jesus saw, that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him: Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.* Mark ix. 25. *And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.* Luke ix. 42.

It should be observed, that the word, *re-buke*, is also used concerning things, to which we do not ascribe either life, or intelligence. *Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.* Matt. vii. 26. *And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said: Peace, be still. And the wind ceased,*

ceased, and there was a great calm. Mark iv. 39. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind, and the raging of the water. And they ceased, and there was a great calm. Luke viii. 24.

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Luke iv. 39. And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever. And it left her.

The truth of the case, as before said, I take to be this. Our Lord in curing distempers, generally ascribed to evil spirits, sometimes accommodated his expressions, and manner of treating such afflicted persons, to the common opinion of the people, without countenancing, or approving it.

III. Acts vi. 9. Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertins, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia, and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.

Acts vi. 9.

In the first part of the Credibility of the Gospel Historie (m) I endeavoured to shew who they were, who are called *Libertins*. Since that time I have met with another interpretation, which I am now desirous to propose to my readers, and to render it more common, than it seems to be. It does not immediatly relate to the subject,

(m) Book i. ch. 3. sect. iv. p. 240—244. the 3d Edition.

of

APP. of which we have been treating here. Nevertheless, I presume none will be much offended at my inserting the observation in this place.

It is in the Academical Exercitationes (n) of Mr. Daniel Gerdes, Professor of Divinity in the University of Groningen. He is of opinion, that (o) these *Libertins* are so called from

(n) *Danielis Gerdesii Exercitationum Academicarum libri tres. 2to. Amst. 1738.*

(o) *Nationis autem atque regionis, non status sive conditionis, Aegyptiorum nomen esse, cum maxime nobis sit probabile, et Libertinos dictos Judaeos, a Liberto, Africae Propriae, sive Carthaginiensis, quae et Proconsularis dicebatur, sive oppido, sive regione, quam habitabant, tametsi ad instar ceterarum, vel Cyrenen vicinam, vel Alexandriam inhabitantium, Hierosolymis suam haberent synagogam, a proprio suo nomine, aequae ac Alexandrinorum ac Cyrenensium appellatam—Et quidem quod ad rationes, nemo non videt, nihil planius nihilque simplicius esse hanc hypothese, quae veram vocabulorum retinet notionem—Accedit in genere, quod cum Libertini jungantur Cyrenensibus, Alexandrinis, Cileicis, et Asianis, et hi tamen omnes a locis habitationis suae appellentur, credibile quoque non sit, Libertinos non a loco vel habitationis sede, sed a conditione, peractam sic a quo yho, prorsus insolita, denominatos esse: imprimis si in specie consideremus, quod Libertinis statim jungantur Cyrenensis et Alexandrini, quibus nominibus itidem Africae incolae designantur, et sive Iudaei sive Profelyti ex illis regionibus oriundi indicabantur.—Suidas tamen in Lexico suo, Tom. 2. fol. 445. edit. Kuster, vocem nostram ad gentem ita nominatam applicari debere manifesto indicat. Aegyptiorum lingua ibi. Libertini, nomen gentis. Glossa quoque interlinearis, cui suae cum primis*

notas

from a city, or countrey, named *Libertus*, or *Libertina*, situated in *Africa*. This appears to be very probable, because all the

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notas superstruxit *Nicolaus de Lyra*, voci *Libertinorum* superscripsit a regione. Unde ipse *Lyra*: *Libertinorum*, inquit, a regione sic nominatorum, ut dicit glossa interlinearis. Sed ubi nam ea sita est regio? Duo sunt in Actis publicis ecclesiasticis nobis relicta monumenta, ex quibus de *Libertinis* vel *Libertinensibus*, eorumque situ, judicare tuto possumus. — Alterum monumentum habemus in Gestis celeberrimae illius A. 411. habitae cum Donatistis Collationis Carthagenensis. Quod cum conservatum sit a conciliorum collectoribus — atque cum ipsis Actis subjunctum editioni praestantissimae *Optati Milevitani* adversus Donatistas, quam procuravit *Elias Du Pinus*. Legitur in Actis Collationis ita: “Item recitavit. Victor Episcopus ecclesiae catholicae *Libertinesis*.” Cel. Baluzii nota ad vocabulum *Libertinensis* haec est l. c. *Libertinensis*. In provincia Proconsulari. Atque ita sua sponte ducimur ad alterum illud quod dicebamus monumentum, ex Actis Concilii Lateranensis. A. 649. habiti, depromptum, ubi habetur Epistola — Episcoporum sancti Concilii Proconsularis ad Paulum Constantinopolitanum, subscripta ab ipsis Episcopis, inter quos quoque occurrit, “Januarius gratia Dei Episcopus sanctae Ecclesiae *Libertinensis*.” — Cum ea propter etiam Cl. Fabricius suo Episcopatuum orbis Christiani Indici Geographico, quem subjecit libro, cui tit. *Salutaris Lux Evangelii*, &c. *Libertinensem Episcopatum in Africa Proconsulari* inferuerit: Cum *Abrahamus Ortelius* non minus jam antehac in Thesauro Geographico quoque annotaverit, “*Libertinorum* tanquam gentis meminisse Divum Lucam Actor. vi. atque gentis nomen esse apud *Suidam*, *Libertinensis* autem Ecclesiae in Africa episcopum habere Collationem Africanam.” *Dan Gerdes*. *Disputatio de Synagoga Libertinorum*. num. xxvii—xxix. p. 509—513.

M

other

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other people here mentioned are denominated from the places inhabited by them. *Suidas* in his Lexicon, at the word *Λιβερτινός*, says, it was the name of a people, though he does not mention the country, in which they dwelt. The *Glossa Interlinearis*, of which *Nicolas de Lyra* made great use, intimates upon this text, that the *Libertins* were so called from a country. In the Acts of the famous Conference with the *Donatists* at *Carthage* in the year 411. is the name of a Bishop of the church of *Libertina*: which is supposed to have been situated in *Africa Propria*, or the Proconsular Province in *Africa*. Another Bishop of the same place, *Libertina*, is mentioned in the Acts of the *Lateran* Council, held in 619. Accordingly *Fabricius*, in his Geographical Index of Christian Bishopricks, has placed *Libertina*, as being in the Proconsular *Africa*. And long before, *Abraham Ortelius*, in his *Thesaurus Geographicus*, at the word *Libertini*, observes, that St. *Luke* in the vi. chapter of the Acts had spoken of the *Libertins* as a people. Moreover *Oecumenius*, in his Commentarie upon the Acts, has mentioned this, as one interpretation;

pretation ; that (p) the *Libertins*, as well as the *Cyrenians*, were a people living beyond *Alexandria*, who had a synagogue at *Jerusalem*.

All these particulars are insisted on by Mr. *Gerdes* in his argument upon the subject. I have transcribed a large part of it below in his own words.

The learned and judicious compilers of the *Bibliothèque Raisonnée*, at the conclusion of their account of this Disputation of Mr. *Gerdes*, add (q) a reference to *Pool's Synopsis*. I shall place below (r) the passage, to which they refer. Whence it may appear, that this interpretation has not been unknown to learned men. But it has not been so much attended to, as I think it deserves. And Mr. *Gerdes* has cast a great

(p) Ἄλλως. Λιβερτίνων καὶ κυρηαίων τῶν ἐπὶ κίβητα ἀλεξανδρείας — ὧν καὶ διάφοροι συναγωγαὶ ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ κατὰ ἰθὺν ἱναυλιζομένην. Διὸ καὶ συναγωγὰς εἶχον τόπως ὁφεισμένοις ἐκ ἀναγνώσεως τῶν μωσίων νόμων. Occurrit, in *AE. T. 1. p. 57.*

(q) *Biblioth. Raisonnée Tom. 24. Part. i. p. 67. Amst. 1740.*

(r) Quinam hi? Resp. 2. Apud Suidam est. Λιβερτῖνοι ὄνομα ἰθὺς, nomen gentis. Idem scribit Ortelius. Quin et *Ecclesia Libertinensis* in Africa habetur in *Collatione Carthagenensi. Pol. Syn. ad AE. vi. 9.*

deal

The Case of the Demoniacs.

deal of new light upon it, and much confirmed it.

Upon the whole, it appears to be very probable, that the *Libertins* were native Jews, and proselytes, living at *Libertus* or *Libertina*, who had a synagogue at *Jerusalem*. And the order of the names in St. *Luke* might lead us to think, that they were farther off from *Jerusalem*, than *Alexandria* and *Cyrene*. Which confirms the supposition, that the place, whence they were named, was situated in what was called *Africa Propria*, or the Proconsular Province.

The END.

